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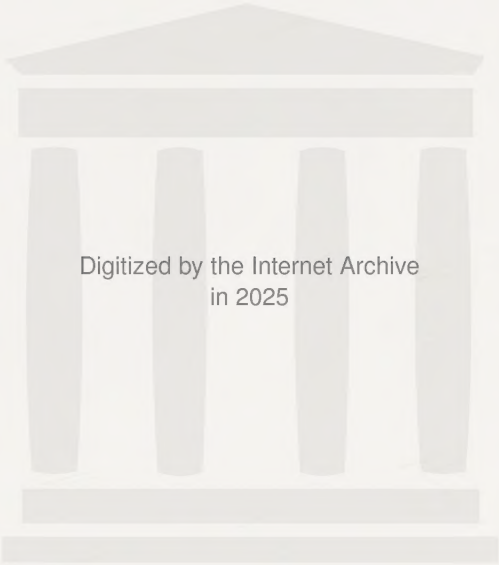
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A

HISTORY OF BAPTISM,

FROM

INSPIRED AND UNINSPIRED WRITINGS.

BY

ISAAC TAYLOR HINTON, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW ORLEANS.

Baptism
Tract
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PREFACE.

The Author of the following pages lays no claim to skill in the apologetic art, and is therefore happy that its exercise is not required on the present occasion.

The volume now offered to the public has been urgently demanded. This demand has been made by the people of his charge; to whom, under Christ (and to whom alone), he owes spiritual obedience. It has been also urged by his brethren in the ministry by whom he is surrounded—primitive *episcopi;* primitive in the extent of their labors, the simplicity of their living, and the devotedness of their sacrifices—and to them he offers these pages as the best proof of his high esteem and fraternal affection.

The Author is aware that the impression exists in the minds of some of his brethren, that the baptismal question has been adequately discussed, and is, in all its important evidences and bearings, well understood by the members of our denomination generally. He apprehends, however, that this impression is not well founded. The learned works of those venerable men concerning whom we have to say, "The fathers, where are they?" testify to the enlightened and laborious zeal of a former age. These valuable works are, however, in possession of very few; it is long since they have been reprinted; nor have any volumes been issued, calculated to supply their place in the polemic literature of the denomination. They are, indeed, too voluminous and

expensive for general circulation. It is the design of the present volume to place within the reach of every member of our denomination, and of every inquirer after truth, in a condensed form, and with a lucid arrangement, the information which the treatises of those able advocates of the truth contain, as well as to diffuse abroad the important additional light which recent investigations have thrown on this interesting branch of ecclesiastical history.

In numerous local contests very valuable Sermons and Replies have issued from the press; as the productions of his highly esteemed brethren, Rev. W. F. Broaddus* and Rev. R. B. C. Howell, D.D.,† and of many others with whom the Author has not the pleasure to be personally acquainted, testify. The following pages will show that the author has not been unmindful of the acute and talented Replies of Prof. Henry J. Ripley, and the late Rev. Willard Judd. Nor would he omit to mention the admirable tract of Pengilly, which has been extensively circulated. The reasons for their change of sentiments given to the public by those who have most happily been led to the perception of their error on this point, are also highly interesting. Among them the recent publication of Prof. M. P. Jewett, formerly of Marietta College, is peculiarly adapted to produce a favorable effect on the inquirer. But still, if there be a volume in general circulation containing the amount of information which should have its place, not only in the library, but in the head and heart of every lover of the truth, the Author has not been fortunate enough to meet with it.‡

* Letters to the Rev. Mr. Slicer, in reply to his Appeal on Infant Baptism.

† Three Sermons on Baptism.

‡ So far from deeming the present work uncalled for, the Author is fully persuaded that the cause of truth yet demands a much larger

Is not the defence and propagation of one important truth, especially committed to our charge as a denomination? And ought not the impression to be produced on the public mind, that its members are better informed on all that relates to this topic than any other body of christians?* It is indeed the duty of every christian to be as well informed on all subjects connected with the history of christianity as his circumstances will admit; but, on a subject possessing a bearing so interesting and important as baptism, it is highly criminal if, through indifference or want of intellectual industry, he should remain in ignorance of any of the facts which pertain, either to the original purity, or to the subsequent corruption, of that ordinance. The following observation of Mr. Taylor (in his valuable work on Ancient Christianity) on the importance of a thorough investigation of controverted points, is as striking as it is just. "At a time when, in the pursuit of secular interests, men in all professions are making unheard-of efforts, and are undergoing labors which our fathers did not dream of, ought it to be considered as a great thing if those to whom the preservation and defence of sacred truths are committed, should be expected to be fully masters of the subject they have to do with?"

The christian who has experienced the satisfaction arising from the full historical investigation of disputed points, will not be unwilling to continue the process till the measure

work; one which will contain such copious extracts from the writings of the fathers, ecclesiastical historians, reformers, and German critics, as shall put our ministering brethren, and very many of our educated lay brethren, in as happy a situation, as to information, for a few dollars, so far as the subject of baptism is concerned, as though they had expended a thousand in the purchase of a library.

* It is a singular and interesting fact, that the University of Oxford (the highest Episcopal institution, or rather collection of Episcopal institutions, in the world,) has recently printed a beautiful edition of Wall's History of Infant Baptism, *with Gale's Reply.*

of his knowledge is full. There is something at once strengthening and delightful in the process of historical investigation. To a mind desirous to form conclusions wholly in accordance with the truth, the possession of *all the facts of the case* is its first and most earnest desire. The views we take of scripture itself are affected by the existence in our minds of other apprehended facts. If the christian is assured that certain practices have undoubtedly been adopted by the whole christian church from the times of the apostles to the present, can it be otherwise than that he will be led to imagine references to such practices in scripture, even if in fact there are none? Admitting that this influence is not a pure one, yet, in point of fact, can it be otherwise than powerful while the human mind is circumstanced as in this imperfect state we know it to be? If it is true that He who overrules all things for the good of his church has permitted such a source of delusion to exist, should not the fallacy of a position, so constantly and confidently assumed with respect to baptism, be clearly and continually held forth to the public view? Should not every christian who holds the truth on this point, for the sake of others as well as himself, be fully informed on all that relates to it? Should not the christian who is doubtful or misinformed, be urged to a thorough investigation of all that pertains to the subject?

A presentation of historic truth on the subject of baptism has become the more necessary at the present time on account of the new aspect which the controversy has assumed. In former times the *fact* was generally, if not universally, admitted, that immersion was the apostolic mode of baptism, and was the general and authorized practice of the church for ages. In the present improved state of christian feeling, however, it has been found by the advocates of sprinkling, that this admission was frequently fatal; that the authority of the church to vary the mode of administration,

which was formerly a general and sufficient plea, will not avail; and that young converts will insist on following what is admitted to be the example of their Lord. It is therefore (though at the imminent risk, to say the least, of moral character) asserted, that there is not the least evidence that Christ was immersed, or that the apostles practised immersion. Indeed, the zeal for sprinkling has become so intense as to lead one of its most prominent advocates, high in ecclesiastical station,* to make the unheard-of affirmation, respecting John the Baptist, that "there is not the *smallest probability* that he baptized in this manner!" The same professor of ecclesiastical history does not hesitate to affirm, "that the strong arguments in favor of affusion or sprinkling, as *the preferable mode*, have been duly appreciated *in all ages*." Is it not necessary that the facts of history should be placed, in a condensed and lucid form, in the possession of all willing to receive them, that the disgrace which must necessarily accrue to the bold propagators of such gross misrepresentations may deter others from similar attempts, more injurious, indeed, to the common character of christianity, than to the particular truth against which they are aimed?

While, however, the Author feels fully acquitted of "running before he was sent," he is very far from thinking that many of his brethren would not have executed this task more to the benefit, as well as to the satisfaction, of the public. He can only say, with the utmost sincerity, that he has shrunk from no labor or self-denial which his circumstances could possibly admit; and, if much of imperfection is found (the common lot of humanity at best), he pleads the necessary and justifiable haste occasioned by a protracted absence from his family and his charge, to mitigate the cen-

* Dr. Miller, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J.

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sures of those whose disapprobation would be to him a source of regret.

In the execution of the work, the labors of research have not been light; although, had circumstances admitted, the Author would willingly have extended them through the whole mass of the Fathers of the ancient church. For this, however, there was the less necessity, as Dr. Wall, in his large collection, has exercised considerable impartiality, and has, at any rate, afforded abundant matter for answering himself and all his associates. The works of Robinson, Gale, Crosby, Gill, Booth, Ripley, Judd, and the articles of Professor Sears in the Christian Review, have been sources of important aid in the compilation of this volume. But the Author is no less indebted to Doddridge, Macknight, Wall, Bingham, and other advocates of pædobaptism; in whose writings many valuable facts and opinions favorable to the truth are to be found. He would rejoice could he say as much respecting the Lectures of Dr. Woods and Dr. Miller, the professors of Andover and Princeton. The former, indeed, for these days, is a work of comparative candor and regard to historic truth, though its *omissions of facts* are unaccountable; but the latter evades the truth at every point, as though it were the Doctor's bitterest enemy. Should any of the students of either of these theological institutions cast their eyes on these pages, the Author would suggest to them the propriety of first giving the Lectures of the learned and amiable Dr. Doddridge (one of the best biblical critics, as well as one of the most pious men, his age produced) a careful perusal, and then, for the purpose of instituting a comparison between the candor of the past age and the blind zeal of the present, of reading Dr. Miller's Lectures as soon after as convenient.*

* The Author would not be considered as including the whole mass of pædobaptists in this implied censure; there are many gratifying

For the kindness of the professors, both of Newton Theological Institution and Hamilton Theological Institution, the Author can find no adequate terms to express his acknowledgments. For the hours they obligingly subtracted from their pressing engagements to chasten or to enrich the volume now presented to the public, they have only as a recompense the consciousness of having promoted the cause of truth. For several translations from the most recent German critics, he is indebted to Prof. Sears; and to Prof. Eaton for many valuable and judicious suggestions.

In addition to the works kindly transmitted from London by his brother, the Rev. John Howard Hinton, the Author has to acknowledge the assistance derived from the library at Newton, which is rich in works on ecclesiastical history, especially in German authors; from the private library of the Rev. Daniel Dodge, of Philadelphia; but, most of all, from the Philadelphia Library, which contains a most valuable collection of works in every department of literature.

He has been careful not to be too original. In historical works originality is always to be suspected. As far as he is aware, he has *made no facts;* but has only stated those which, by diligent research, he found already in existence. In many cases the writer has preferred to give statements in the very words of the authors he has quoted, as being far more satisfactory than rewriting them. Robinson erred in

exceptions, especially among Congregationalists and Episcopalians. Among the latter an eminent instance has recently occurred, in the bold and candid avowal of Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, who publicly affirms that, after the most careful investigation and mature reflection, he considers immersion to be the only apostolic mode of baptism; and recommends the church of which he is an eminent and highly esteemed minister, to delegate one of its number to procure immersion at the hands of a Greek priest, that, having received it in undoubted succession from the apostles, he may be authorized to administer baptism in its ancient purity to all his brethren on this side of the Atlantic.

this, and impaired the confidence which would otherwise have been placed in his statements. The Author had also another reason; it was that he might afford to many who do not possess the original works, specimens of the various ecclesiastical writers in different ages of the world.

The Author now commends his labors to his brethren, and to christians in general who prefer *the truth* to gold or fame, to ecclesiastical associations, or to private friendship; but, above all, to the blessing of Him who is emphatically THE TRUTH, and who alone can render this effort in any measure effectual to set the minds of his people free from the delusions of error, and thus to promote the ultimate union of all who love Him in one glorious visible organization, as they are now one in heart.

CHICAGO, *August*, 1840.

NEW EDITION.

The following "History of Baptism" has been so generally approved, that *five thousand* copies have been sold since its first publication, in August, 1840.

In the year following its publication in the United States, a handsome edition was published in England, by "Houlston and Stoneman, 65 Paternoster Row, London." The English edition was enhanced in value, on account of its being "revised and recommended by John Howard Hinton, A. M." known in this country as the author of "The work of the Holy Spirit in Conversion," "The Active Christian," &c. In an Introductory Note, dated London, October 8th, 1841, he says,

"It is a great recommendation of the Work that it takes up the subject of Baptism as a whole; that it is neither a reply to any antagonist, nor a vindication of any particular point. The information thus brought together is more copious, and the view exhibited to the reader more complete and satisfactory.

"He exhibits in this treatise even more originality than might have been deemed possible on such a subject. He often argues independently, and in these cases he attains

much point, clearness, and success: while every page is characterized by a constitutional and inexhaustible vivacity, which renders the perusal of the work almost as entertaining as it is instructive.

"I can speak well of its temper. I do not mean to say that the writer never uses confidence in the expression of his own views, or severity in exposing the views of others. On the contrary, he hits freely and hard. But he never quarrels. He is not bitter or uncharitable. He fights, not against men, but against error; and he challenges reply, rather than provokes hostility.

"On the whole, I warmly recommend it to perusal. If I am herein influenced at all by gratification that a beloved brother has produced it, I am sure I am influenced also, and more powerfully, by a conviction that it is adapted to render important service to the cause of truth, and to the church of God."

The author having carefully revised the work, it is now stereotyped, and again sent forth to the public, by the Board of the American Baptist Publication Society.

THOMAS S. MALCOM,
Corresponding Secretary.

PHILADELPHIA, *July*, 1846.

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HISTORY OF BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

IMPORT OF THE TERM BAPTIZO.

SECTION I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES RELATING TO THE MEANING OF WORDS.

The inquirer after historic truth will readily perceive, that, to attain a correct idea of any fact, he must possess a clear apprehension of the terms in which the occurrence of that fact is stated. The first historic record on the subject of baptism as a moral institute, is by the evangelist Matthew: "Then went out to him [John] all Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. iii. 5, 6.) With respect to the character of the persons referred to in this brief narrative no dispute has arisen; but it is denied by some that the action performed is defined, further than that water was in some method applied to the persons spoken of. On the other hand it is maintained, that the term *baptize*, from the Greek *baptizo*, specifically designates and requires the act of immersion, and admits of no other. It is important that this question should first be decided; and therefore, although the course of the history will throw additional light on this

point, it will be desirable at once to adduce those arguments which are philological rather than historical, that the inquirer may have his mind cleared from all difficulty, or at least be better prepared to judge of the bearing of history in this respect.

That language, as hitherto constituted, has in all ages proved but an imperfect medium for the communication of ideas, will not be denied. This arises mainly from the employment of one word in various senses. Yet it is rare that the connexion or other circumstances have any material difficulty in determining in what sense the word is to be used. It is also to be observed, that some words have been subjected to a great variety of meanings, while others have retained in all circumstances their original signification.

Of the varied meanings of words the following are the most important, and more than sufficient for the present investigation. 1. Primitive, or original. 2. Ordinary. 3. Metaphorical, or figurative. 4. Technical.

The primitive signification is the earliest to which any word can be traced, whether it be native to the language of the author, or of foreign origin. In some instances the primary and ordinary meanings are identical, in others they widely differ. Of the former kind *immerse*, from the Latin *immergo*, affords an instance: of the latter, *prevent*, from *prævenio*, the primary meaning of which is *to go before*, but the ordinary to *hinder*. It is manifest, however, that the meaning of a word in any given case is not to be determined by its original sense, but by its actual ordinary meaning in the language in which the author wrote, and at the time of his writing; unless the circumstances in which the word occurs require a figurative or technical signification (which may also include the ordinary) to be attached.

Figurative meanings arise from a variety of causes. Sometimes the figure involves but a slight change from the original

or ordinary meaning, in other cases it bears but little resemblance to the original; as in the verb to *contract* (from the Latin *contraho*), the original meaning is simply to *draw together;* the ordinary, to *abridge* or *make less;* the figurative or technical, to *make a bargain.* By far the most frequent occasion of the figurative use of words, is when terms purely physical in their origin are applied to intellectual or moral purposes; for instance, *firmness* refers originally to the hardness and solidity of matter, but figuratively to decision of mental character; *levity* originally refers to the small proportion which the quantity of matter in any given body bears to its bulk, but figuratively to the absence of proper steadiness, intellectual or moral. As a general principle, little assistance can be derived in defining the physical and original meaning of a term, by referring to the figurative or metaphorical sense in which it has been used. Take the verb *to bridle:* how can any disquisition on the proper regulation of our conversational powers help the young equestrian to understand how he is to put the bit in his horse's mouth? In some instances, however, the figure can only accord with a definite literal meaning.

Technical meanings (requisite for purposes of law, physic, or the arts and sciences) are usually selected, as occasion may arise, from some foreign language; but, in some instances, terms already in use receive a technical sense. *A conveyance* (from the Latin *conveho*) is originally *the act of conveying* from one place to another; ordinarily, *the carriage* in which transportation takes place; technically, *a deed* transferring property from one person to another. Yet, with all these varieties, it is scarcely possible any intelligent reader could doubt whether an author meant to designate a stage coach or a parchment deed, unless his mind were warped by the question affecting some important interest with which he was connected. There are cases, however, in which no possible

difficulty can occur, because the ordinary meaning is included in the technical, and the original external act constitutes an essential part of its newly appropriated or technical sense.

One more general observation on the meaning of words will suffice. In all languages there are words of a more specific, and others of a more vague signification. It will be reasonable to presume, therefore, that, where an author designs to represent an action without defining the mode, he uses a general term; but, where he intends specifically to designate the precise mode of action, he will be found to use a word corresponding to his object.

Let these plain principles be applied to the term *baptizo* as used by the New Testament writers, and even by the Greek classics, and I apprehend the result will leave no doubt on the mind of the candid inquirer. I will not, however, anticipate his convictions by making that application before the facts as to the use of the term, both in sacred and profane writers, have been fully laid before him.

SECTION II.

MEANING OF BAPTIZO IN THE WRITINGS OF THE GREEK CLASSICS.

It is a happy circumstance that but one Greek term has been employed with reference to the ordinance of baptism. The word *bapto* is never found in this connexion; yet much time has been needlessly expended in this controversy respecting it. While, indeed, it was contended that the termination *zo* was a *diminutive*, and therefore that *baptizo* must designate something less than *bapto*, it might have been of some consequence; but, since this position has been

abandoned as untenable,* the question simply is, what is the act the term *baptizo* designates? It may, however, be proper to observe, that, while *bapto* was used frequently for *dyeing* and coloring in various methods, this is *never* the case with *baptizo*.†

That the *primitive* meaning of *baptizo* is to *immerse* or *dip*, is conceded by all the advocates of sprinkling of any pretension to philological knowledge; and the fact that all lexicographers, ancient and modern, concur in this opinion, precludes discussion.

* "I should incline to give the word the meaning, to cause to come into that state, and this idea is favoured by the termination *zo*.—*President Beecher's import of the term Baptizo. Bib. Repos. Jan.* 1840, p. 48.

† "*Bapto* is never used to denote the ordinance of baptism, and *baptizo* never signifies to dye. The primitive word *bapto* has two significations, the primary to *dip*, the secondary to *dye*. But the derivative is formed to modify the primary only; and in all the Greek language I assert that an instance is not to be found in which it has the secondary meaning of the primitive word. If this assertion is not correct, it will be easy for learned men to produce an example in contradiction. That *bapto* is never applied to the ordinance of baptism, any one can verify who is able to look into the passages of the Greek Testament where the ordinance is spoken of. Now, if this observation is just, it overturns all those speculations that explain the word, as applied to baptism, by an allusion to dyeing; for the primitive word that has this secondary meaning is not applied to the ordinance; and the derivative word which is appointed to express it has not the secondary signification of *dyeing*. *Bapto* has two meanings; *baptizo*, in the whole history of the Greek language, has but one. It not only signifies to dip or immerse, but it never has any other meaning. Each of these words has its specific province, into which the other cannot enter; while there is a common province in which either of them may serve. Either of them may signify to dip generally; but the primitive cannot specifically express that ordinance to which the derivative has been appropriated; and the derivative cannot signify to *dye*, which is a part of the province of the primitive. The difference is precise and important. Most of the confusion of ideas on both sides of the question, with respect to the definite meaning of the word baptism, has arisen from overlooking this difference."—*Baptism in its Mode and Subjects considered.* By ALEXANDER CARSON, LL.D., p. 19.

The *ordinary*, or general meaning, throughout the Greek classics, has been established by Gale, Stuart, Gill, Booth, Carson, Ripley, Judd, and others, beyond the possibility of successful dispute. Hundreds of instances in which the word can admit of no other meaning, have been quoted at length. On this point the acknowledgment of President Beecher may supersede the necessity of reference to the passages themselves: "I fully admit that in numerous cases it clearly denotes to immerse, in which case an agent submerges, partially or totally, some person or thing. Indeed, this is so notoriously true, that I need attempt no proof. *Innumerable* examples are at hand, and enough may be found in all the most common discussions of this subject."

Mr. Beecher, however, with Professors Stuart, Woods, and others, thinks, that in a few instances in the writings of the Greek classics *baptizo* has been used in a sense in which immersion cannot be fairly implied. The reader shall judge with what propriety this conclusion is inferred from the premises.

"It is also applied to cases where a fluid is poured copiously over any thing so as to flood it, though not completely or permanently to submerge it. Of this usage I shall adduce but one example: Origen, referring to the copious pouring of water by Elijah on the wood and on the sacrifice, represents him as baptizing them. For the passage, and remarks on it, see Wall's History of Infant Baptism. It is also applied to cases where a fluid without an agent rolls over, or floods, and covers any thing, as in the oft-quoted passage in Diodorus Siculus, vol. iii. p. 191, as translated by Professor Stuart: 'The river, borne along by a more violent current, overwhelmed many,' (*ebaptize.*) So, vol. i. p. 107, he speaks of land animals intercepted by the Nile, as *baptizomena*, overwhelmed and perishing. The same mode of speaking is also applied to the seashore, which is spoken of by Aris-

tode as baptized or overwhelmed by the tide. It is also applied in cases where some person or thing sinks passively into the flood. Thus Josephus, in narrating his shipwreck on the Adriatic, uses this word to describe the sinking of the ship."*

These three instances are a fair specimen of those (a very few) in which the term is used in a somewhat extended sense,† but not extended beyond the proper application of the term *immerse*. The altar of Elijah, the many overwhelmed by the river, the animals in the Nile, he who sank passively in the flood, were all immersed; and it is remarkable that no instance should have been yet produced of the use of the term *baptizo* to which the word immerse may not with propriety be applied. Professor Pond, however, thinks the case of dipping the bucket in the well, as quoted from Callimachus, does not imply immersion!‡ It does not appear to me, however, in the slightest degree important to the argument, that no cases of variation of meaning should be found. What word can be more specific than the Saxon word *dip?* And yet we have the *dip* of the magnetic needle, which has certainly nothing to do with plunging. Could several instances of extension or dilution of meaning be found among the profane Greek writers, it would not affect the question, which is, In what sense did Christ and his apostles use the term *baptizo*, and what did they design the disciples then and now to understand by it? We shall presently see that the sacred writers used it in its ordinary acceptation—that of *immerse*.

* American Biblical Repository, Jan. 1840. Art. III. by President Beecher. Page 47.

† Would our brethren be willing to use such a pouring as is described to have taken place at the celebrated sacrifice where Elijah put the false prophets to shame?

‡ "To-day, ye drawers of water, *ne baptete*, draw up none." Is it not *dip up?* the idea of a bucket or other vessel being distinctly alluded to

Professor Stuart thinks that a general meaning of *baptizo* is to *overwhelm*, as well as to immerse. Mr. Judd considers that in all cases the idea of immersion is clearly incorporated; and in this he has followed Carson, whose opinion is justly esteemed high authority. Mr. Carson contends that *baptizo* "always signifies to *dip*: never expresses any thing but *mode*." When it is considered, however, how customary it is, in all languages, to use words of the most specific character occasionally in a sense varying slightly from their strict meaning, it would seem extraordinary that such an instance should never have occurred in the case of *baptizo*. Referring to the quotation from Aristotle, in which he relates a saying among the Phœnicians, that there are certain places beyond the pillars of Hercules, which, when it is ebb-tide, *are not baptized*, but at full tide *are inundated or overflowed*, Mr. Judd observes, that "Professor Stuart thinks that because the land is not actually taken and put into the water, but the water brought over it, *baptizo* must here have a different shade of meaning, and chooses to render it *overwhelm*. This would answer in a free translation: but it is not the meaning of the word. *Baptizo* has strictly the same signification here that it has every where else; nor has it, in such situations, any more latitude of application than is frequently true of the correspondent term in English: for, though immersion strictly implies that the thing immersed is put into the immersing substance, yet, as Mr. Carson very justly observes, when the same effect is produced without the usual manner of the operation, the name of the operation is often catachrestically given to the result."*

On this point it may be justly observed, that, whatever may be the technical term applied in this slight latitude of meaning, it does not alter the fact itself: and it may be safely affirmed, with the instances of Professors Stuart and Woods

* Judd's Review of Stuart, p. 23.

before us, that the general meaning of *baptizo* is to *dip, plunge, immerse;* and its secondary or occasional signification, to *overwhelm*, literally or figuratively. This is the precise position taken by Professor Ripley, in his lucid and satisfactory Review of Stuart; equally decisive, and more difficult to assail, than the somewhat higher ground taken by Carson. It may further be added, that this term is never used, even in the Greek classics, for *washing*, except where the cleansing was performed by dipping; and that it is never applied to the mere act of *pouring* or *sprinkling*.*

It has already been suggested that the figurative use of a physical term may illustrate, but cannot *define* the meaning of the word. That nothing, however, which has been alleged to have a bearing on the subject may be omitted, a few lines will be devoted to the metaphorical application of *baptizo* in the Greek classics. The ancients use the term *baptizo*, when they desire to express "a city *plunged* in sleep." Virgil speaks of a city "*buried* in sleep and wine." Josephus, of one who was "*sunk* into insensibility by excessive drinking." Diodorus Siculus, "they do not *sink* their subjects with taxes." To be *plunged* in debt, or to be *immersed* in pleasure, are phrases too well known to endanger any one mistaking the figure. Other quotations of a similar character may be found in Ripley's and Judd's Replies to Stuart: in both of these works they are treated at once with great skill and fairness.—Were there any instance to show that among the Greek classics the figurative use of *baptizo* had been considerably extended from its physical or ordinary import, it would have been so utterly destitute of any material bearing on the great question before us, that it is rather for

* There are clearly circumstances, however, in which *overwhelming* is truly baptism; when, for instance, baptizing in the sea or lake, as the candidate is laid down by the administrator a wave rolls over him —by no means an unfrequent occurrence.

the satisfaction of our curiosity than for its argumentative support, that even this pains has been taken to prove that our opponents gain not even a rosebud of flowers, much less materials for war, by an excursion among the figurative regions of Greek poesy.

Before taking leave of classical authors, and confining our observations to the Scriptures, let us examine how the case stands with *baptizo*, on the suggestions with respect to the meaning of words made at the commencement of this chapter.

1. Primative, or original—that of *baptizo* is to *immerse* or *dip*.

2. Ordinary—that of *baptizo* is to *immerse* or *dip*.

3. Figurative or metaphorical—that of *baptizo* is to *immerse* or *overwhelm*.

4. Technical—*baptizo* has no technical meaning; *bapto* was technically used for dyeing, coloring, and even gilding; but *baptizo* was *never* thus employed.

I am aware that pædobaptist readers will be amazed at this statement: they can examine whether Professor Stuart, President Beecher, or any other writer, has produced a passage from the Greek classics to the contrary.

SECTION III.

IMPORT OF BAPTIZO IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND APOCRYPHA.

"NAAMAN went down and *plunged himself* (*ebaptisato*) seven times in Jordan." (2 Kings v. 14.) This is Professor Stuart's translation. The prophet had directed him to "go and *wash* seven times in Jordan;" and, as he had not the benefit of pædobaptist disquisitions on Greek prepositions,

instead of standing on the bank "*at* Jordan," he actually went and dipped himself seven times *in* Jordan. It is certainly a literary curiosity that great scholars, even the candid Professor Stuart, should feel quite sure that the word in the Second Book of Kings means to *dip in* Jordan,* while a misty doubt still hangs over their minds respecting the meaning of the self-same words in Matthew. Do these gentlemen themselves feel no apprehension that this is an illustration of the principle of moral philosophy, that it requires greater evidence to convince us against our inclinations or prepossessions, than where no mental bias exists?

This passage presents a suitable opportunity to show, that the favorite meaning which pædobaptist divines desire to fasten on *baptizo*, that of *wash*,† is a meaning which never

* Yet Professor Pond persists in bringing this case of Naaman to prove that *baptizo* is equivalent to *louo*, and means to wash. Who denies that *baptizo* often means to wash? It is affirmed, however, that in such cases it means to wash by dipping, which all the world knows was the case with Naaman.

† The three requisites on which President Beecher insists as essential to the determination of the word, in which I cordially concur, utterly destroy *all* the *previous* attempts to pervert the term *baptizo;* while his attempt to find a *new way* of escape for his friends, is, in my view, as utterly inefficient as all the efforts which he so candidly condemns. "A view," says this author, "which shall effectually do this (give satisfaction and rest to an inquiring mind) will be found to have the following requisites:

"(1) That it shall be strictly philological.

"(2) That, out of all the possible meanings of *baptizo*, it shall fix on ONE as the real meaning in the case in question.

"(3) *That it shall at all times steadily adhere to this.*"—*Bib. Rep.* p. 46.

These three "requisites" necessary to "give rest," certainly overthrow all previous attempts to affix *wash*, *pour*, or *sprinkle*, or all of them, as the meaning to *baptizo;* for that neither of them can be "steadily adhered to at all times" is too evident to require illustration. That the learned gentleman's fourth requisite should be necessary "to give satisfaction and rest to an inquiring mind," partakes of the marvellous, viz.: *That this shall limit the performance of the rite to no particu-*

can be ascribed to the term itself: it quite as truly signifies to *defile*, as to *wash* or *cleanse*. It is true that the prophet uses *louo* (to bathe, or wash), and Naaman *dips* himself: it is clear, therefore, that *baptizo*, in certain circumstances, does signify that a dipping is to be performed which shall effect a washing or cleansing: but in other circumstances a dipping may occur by which the object plunged shall be defiled, as in the case of the sword of Ajax, which was plunged up to the hilt in the throat of Cleobulus: on which Dionysius observes, that the poet (Homer) expresses himself with great emphasis, representing the sword to be so baptized (*baptisthentos*) as to become warm with blood. We presume in this case *baptizo* does not mean to wash. The same may be said respecting the swords and helmets *baptized* in the marshes,

lar mode." This really presents one of the most singular instances of absence of mind that has ever occurred in the field of theological controversy. The question in debate is, "Whether the term *baptizo* does limit the performance of the rite to any particular mode or not;" and one of the President's essential principles of *investigation* is, that the true meaning of the term *must* be one which "shall limit the performance of the right to NO particular mode!" All other attempts to find out such a meaning having, in his deliberate judgment, fairly failed, he sets out, not to ascertain the true import of *baptizo*, but to find out (which he acknowledges has never been done) a meaning which will "limit the performance of the rite to *no particular mode.*" And, with this object in view, he has succeeded to his own satisfaction; and stands, as imagined by himself, in the proud position of being the only individual who has ever had *satisfactory* ground for believing that the term *baptizo* limits the rite to no particular mode: for, after having investigated and summed up the labors of his predecessors, he observes, "None of these positions is, in my judgment, adapted to explain all the facts which occur in the use of the word, and to give satisfaction and rest to an inquiring mind."—*Bib. Rep.* p. 46.

It cannot but be expected that many will turn the deaf ear of prejudice to the call of an opponent; but surely those who are taking a delusive repose will hear the voice of President Beecher assure them, that, however sound their slumbers, they are occasioned by the opiates of error, and not by arguments "adapted to give satisfaction and rest to an inquiring mind."

after the battle of Orchomenus: where it is surely quite as clear that *baptizo* means to *cause to need washing*, as that it signifies to *wash*. The fact is, that the *strict meaning* of a word is one which is *peculiar* to it; to IMMERSE suits ALL the cases in which *baptizo* is used *literally;* it is the ONLY meaning which does so; and is therefore the true meaning.*

* The observations of Mr. Carson on this important point are so full and satisfactory, that, for the benefit of those who have not that able work, I extract them.

"To explain this point more clearly, I shall lay down a canon, and by this I mean a first principle in criticism. That which does not contain its own evidence is not entitled to the name of a critical canon. I do not request my readers to admit my canon; I insist on their submission—let them deny it if they can. My canon is, that, in certain situations, two words, OR EVEN SEVERAL WORDS, MAY WITH EQUAL PROPRIETY FILL THE SAME PLACE, THOUGH THEY ARE ALL ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT IN THEIR SIGNIFICATIONS. The physician, for instance, may, with equal propriety and perspicuity, say, either 'Dip the bread in the wine,' or 'Moisten the bread in the wine.' Yet this does not import that *dip* signifies to *moisten*, or that *moisten* signifies to *dip*. Each of these words has its own peculiar meaning, which the other does not possess. *Dip the bread* does not say *moisten the bread*, yet it is known that the object of dipping is to *moisten*. Now, it is from ignorance of this principle that lexicographers have given meanings to words which they do not possess: and have thereby laid a foundation for evasive criticism on controverted subjects, with respect to almost all questions. In Greek it might be said with equal propriety *deusai en oino*, or *bapsai en oino*, '*moisten in wine*,' or '*dip in wine*;' and from this circumstance it is rashly and unphilosophically concluded that one of the meanings of *bapto* is to *moisten*.

"The word occurs in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and is faithfully rendered *dip* in our version. (2 Kings v. 14.) 'Naaman went down and dipped himself (*ebaptisato*, seven times in Jordan.' Here bathing in a river is called *baptism*. What more do we want, then, to teach us the mode of this ordinance of Christ? If there was not another passage of Scripture to throw light on the institution, as far as respects mode, is not this, to every teachable mind, perfectly sufficient? But, it seems, we are crying victory before the field is won. This passage, which we think so decisive, has a far different aspect to others. On the contrary, it is made to afford evidence against us. Well, this is strange indeed: but more may be in reserve. Let us see how arti-

The term is used Isa. xxi. 4. "Iniquity *sinks* me:" in our translation, "Fearfulness affrighted me." Professor Stuart seems to have misunderstood this passage. As Mr. Judd observes, it is the iniquity of others that presses down

fice can involve the passage in a cloud. Nothing is more easy. Does not the prophet command Naaman to *wash?* If, then, he obeyed this command by *baptizing* himself, *baptizing* must signify *washing*. For the sake of argument, I will grant this reasoning for a moment. If, then, this is so, go, my brethren, and wash the person to be baptized, as you think Naaman washed himself from head to foot. This will show that you respect the example. In what manner soever the water was applied to Naaman, he was bathed all over. If the word signifies to wash the whole body who but the Pope himself, would take on him to substitute the sprinkling of a few drops in the place of this universal washing?

"But I do not admit the reasoning, that, from this passage, concludes that *baptizo* signifies to wash, although no instance can be produced more plausible in favor of that opinion. This passage is a complete illustration of my canon. The two words *louo* and *baptizo* are here used interchangeably, yet they are not of the same signification. Not of the same signification? it may be asked, with surprise. Elisha commands him to *wash;* he obeys by *baptizing* himself; must not *baptizing*, then, be *washing?* I think none of my opponents will wish a stronger statement of their objection than I have made for them. But my doctrine remains uninjured by the assault. The true philologist will not find the smallest difficulty in reconciling this passage to it. The words *louo* and *baptizo* have their own peculiar meanings even here, as well as every where else, without the smallest confusion. To *baptizo* is not to *wash;* but to baptize *in a river, or in any pure water*, implies washing, and may be used for it in certain situations. If Naaman *dipped* himself in Jordan, he was *washed*. It comes to the same thing, whether a physician says, *Bathe yourself every morning in the sea*, or *Dip yourself every morning in the sea;* yet the words *bathe* and *dip* do not signify the same thing. We see, then, that we can make the very same use of our modal word *dip*, that the Greeks made of their *baptizo*. No man who understands English will say that the word *dip* and the word *bathe* signify the same thing, yet, in certain situations, they may be used indifferently. Persons at a bath may ask each other, Did you *dip* this morning? or, Did you *bathe* this morning? To *dip* may apply to the *defiling* of any thing, as well as to *washing*. It expresses no more than the mode. It is the situation in which it stands, and the word with which it is construed, must determine the object of the appli-

the prophet, not, as Mr. S. would have it, that the prophet's own iniquity overwhelmed him. But I see no objection to admitting "overwhelm" as a figurative meaning of *baptizo* in this and other passages.

Two passages may be referred to in the Apocrypha. "And at night she [Judith] went out into the valley of Bethulia, and *immersed* herself at the fountain in the camp" (Judith xii. 7); and, "If one who is *immersed* from a dead [carcass] toucheth it again, what is he profited by his bath?" Ecclus. xxxi. 25.

In neither case is there any difficulty or impropriety in translating the term used (*baptizo*) *immerse*, which the plainest English reader can see as well as the most learned. "Of these passages I observe," says Professor Ripley, "it is by no means clear that the radical meaning of *baptizo* ought to be left out of sight, so that the word should be translated by the general term *wash*, or *cleanse*, without any allusion made to the specified kind or extent of the washing. Are there any circumstances which entirely forbid us to believe that bathing the whole person is here intended? If there be no necessity for departing from the radical and ordinary meaning, then we are not at liberty to put another construction upon the word." The learned reviewer then most justly observes "that it is nowhere in the book of Judith intimated that the action was performed 'in the midst of the camp.' All parts of a camp are not equally exposed, and the place to which she resorted seems to have been chosen, because, among other reasons, it was somewhat retired; she went to that place habitually for special prayer and purification. Besides, this religious ceremony was performed in the

cation of the mode. To *dip* in pure water, is to wash; to dip in coloring matter, is to dye; to dip into mire, is to defile. None of these ideas, however, are in the word *dip* itself. No word could determine mode, according to the principles of criticism employed by writers on this subject."—*Carson*, pp. 56, 57, 59, 60.

night; and Holofernes, the general of the army, had given express orders that no one should interfere with her movements."* The vindication of the meaning of *baptizo* in Eccles. xxxi. 25, is equally easy; but, as the arguments are essentially the same as those which relate to Luke xi. 5–8, the reader is referred to the next Section.

SECTION IV.

LITERAL IMPORT OF BAPTIZO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THERE are upwards of a hundred instances in which the verb *baptizo* and the noun *baptisma* occur in the books of which the New Testament is composed. Those which relate to the ordinance itself, will be investigated in subsequent chapters. There are thirteen instances in which this term is applied to other objects; of these five only are in its literal, and eight in a figurative sense. The plain meaning of the term has been assailed through these passages: with how much success the reader will be able to determine for himself. The position we maintain is, *that there is no instance in which the term baptizo, when used in reference to a bodily act, ought not to be translated immerse.* It will now be seen whether, in either of the five cases alluded to, this position is in the slightest degree shaken.†

* Ripley's Reply to Stuart, p. 28.

† The "modern position" of pedobaptists is thus boldly stated by Dr. Miller:—"I am aware, indeed, that our Baptist brethren, as before intimated, believe, and confidently assert, that the only legitimate and authorized meaning of this word is to immerse: and that it is *never* employed, in a single case, in any part of the Bible, to express the application of water in any other manner. *I can venture*, my friends, *to assure you*, with the utmost confidence, that this representation is

"Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault; for the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash they eat not. And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do." Mark vii. 1–8.

The word used in the phrase "wash their hands," is *nipsontai;* that in "except *they wash,*" is *baptizontai;*

wholly incorrect. *I can assure you*, that the word which we render baptize, does legitimately signify the application of water in any way, as well as by immersion. Nay, *I can assure you*, if the most mature and competent Greek scholars that ever lived may be allowed to decide in this case, that many examples of the use of this word occur in Scripture, in which it not only *may*, but manifestly *must*, signify sprinkling, perfusion, or washing in any way."

Again:—"Now, we contend that this word does not necessarily, nor even commonly, signify to immerse; but also implies to wash, to sprinkle, to pour on water, and to tinge or dye with any liquid; and therefore accords very well with the mode of baptism by sprinkling or affusion."

After taking this bold ground, the Doctor very wisely declines entering into the details of Greek criticism, as not "suitable to our purpose." The Doctor is right there. I have simply to ask, whether Dr. Miller believes Calvin, Luther, Johnson, Porson, Neander, to be mature and competent Greek scholars? Knowing their sentiments, as he must be presumed to do, to be in concurrence with many other great English scholars and divines, and the great majority of the German critics, I am filled with deep regret that a Christian man in such a position should risk his moral character, by printing a statement so very remote from the truth.

the washing of cups is *baptismous*, and the same in the eighth verse.

The other two instances are so nearly referring to the same customs, that they will be introduced here; the same explanation making all equally plain.

"And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not washed first before dinner." Luke xi. 37, 38.

The term mistranslated "*washed*" is "immersed himself," *ebaptisthe.*

"Which stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." Heb. ix. 10.

The term rendered "*washings*" is immersions, *baptismous.*

First, respecting the declaration that the Jews, "when they come from market, except they *wash*, eat not;" and the fact that the Pharisee wondered that Christ did not "wash" before dinner: I claim, not only that in both cases the term *may be* translated immerse, but that *it ought* so to have been translated. Rendering the word otherwise is contrary to the plain rule that, *the ordinary meaning of a word being established, it is not to be changed without necessity requires it*; and where is any kind of *necessity* in these cases? Suppose it was not known that it was customary for the Jews to immerse themselves in the bath after coming from market, or from a crowd (which is the true meaning of *agora*), before they ate their dinner; because we may be ignorant of a custom alluded to, does that affect the meaning of a plain word? "Let it be observed," says Mr. Carson, "and never let it be forgotten, that, with respect to the mean-

ing of a word in any passage, the proof that it has such a meaning always lies upon him who uses it in that meaning as an argument or objection; for this obvious reason, that, if it is not proved, it is neither argument nor objection."

There is every reasonable probability, however, (independently of these passages, which render it yet more probable,) that it was the custom among the Jews to immerse themselves in the cases alluded to. "Why should it be thought incredible," observes Mr. Carson, "that the Pharisees immersed themselves after market? If an Egyptian, on touching a swine, would run to the river and plunge in with his clothes, is it strange that superstitious Pharisees should immerse themselves after the pollution of the market?"* It may be added, that the tradition of the elders, or, as the Jews call them, "the words of the scribes, the commands of the wise men," expressly require dipping. "In general," they say, "wheresoever in the law, washing of the flesh or of the clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else but the dipping of the whole body in water; for, if any man wash himself all over except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness."†

Many of the most learned pædobaptist writers, and their

* Dr. Gale observes, that "all the versions in the Polyglot, except those of Montanus and the vulgar Latin, to wit, the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic and Persic, unanimously understand the words in a sense quite different from what has been hitherto mentioned; that is, they all take the meaning to be, not that the Jews washed themselves, or their hands, when they came from the market, but that the herbs, for instance, and other things they bought there, were first to be washed, before they could be eaten. Thus they translate the place, *And what they buy in the market, unless it be washed, they eat not.* It must be owned, the Greek is capable of this sense."—It may be presumed that things coming from the market are very apt to be *immersed* before they come on the table. I do not apprehend, however, this to be the meaning of the passage.

† Robinson's History of Baptism. London, 4to. 1790, p. 32.

best biblical critics, are of opinion that two sorts of washing of hands are referred to; one by pouring water on them (*nipsontai*), the other by dipping (*baptizontai*). Professor Ripley, in his Reply, quotes Jahn's Biblical Archæology, Rosenmüller, Kuinoel, Spencer, Lightfoot, and Dr. G. Campbell, to that effect. I give the testimony of the latter:—

"For illustrating this passage, let it be observed, first, that the two verbs rendered *wash* in the English translation are different in the original. The first is *nipsontai*, properly translated *wash*; the second is *baptizontai*, which limits us to a particular mode of washing, for *baptizo* denotes *to plunge* or *dip*." Accordingly, Dr. Campbell translates the passage, "For the Pharisees eat not, until they have washed their hands by pouring a little water upon them; and, if they be come from market, by dipping them."

Secondly, the baptism of pots, brazen vessels, and beds, not *tables*. How pots and other vessels are cleansed is well known to all except pædobaptist literati; with respect to beds there is something strange, till the Jewish customs on this point are understood. Maimonides, the well-known Jewish writer, is surely sufficient authority on this point. He observes, "In a laver which holds forty *seahs* of water, they dip all unclean vessels. *A bed that is wholly defiled*, if he dips it part by part, it is pure. If he dips the bed in the pool, although the feet are plunged in the thick clay at the bottom of the pool, it is clean. What shall he do with a pillow or a bolster of skin? He must dip them and lift them up by the fringes." And yet Dr. Wardlaw says, with respect to the immersion of beds, "He who can receive it, let him receive it." Mr. Carson justly, though perhaps severely, replies, "He who dares reject it, rejects the testimony of God."*

* "If *immersion* is the meaning of the word, it is not optional to receive or reject it. Whether or not this is its meaning must be learned

The remaining case is that of "divers baptisms." Now, having already shown that the Jews used divers immersions, although it be perfectly true they used divers sprinklings also, we need only add, for what possible reason should the word appropriate to immersion here be referred to sprinklings? We never claim a word appropriated to sprinkling (*rhantizo*, for instance,) to mean immersion. There *were* divers *immersions*, and they are referred to in the passage.

It is really amusing to observe how the blind zeal of Dr. Miller plunges him into difficulty on this passage:—"But, happily, the inspired apostle does not leave us in doubt what those 'divers baptisms' were of which he speaks. He singles out and presents sprinkling as his chosen and only specimen.* 'For,' says he, in the 13th, 19th, and 21st verses of the same chapter, explaining what he means by 'divers baptisms,' 'If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, *sprinkling* the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, &c. For, when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled* both the book and all the people.

from its history, not from the abstract probability or improbability of the immersion of beds. If the history of the word declares its meaning to be immersion, *the mere difficulty of immersing beds, in conformity to a religious tradition, cannot imply that it has another meaning here.* The principle, then, of this objection, and the language in which these writers state it, cannot be too strongly reprobated. If adopted on other questions respecting the will of God, it tends to set us loose from the authority of his word."—*Carson*, p. 72.

* The Doctor forgets that the apostle mentions "carnal ordinances," as well as "washings;" can he expect his reader will forget too? A child could correct the President, by telling him that the "sprinkling of blood" referred to the "carnal ordinances," not the "washings." "Sprinkling with blood" a "washing?" Even the Doctor's "*I can assure you*" will fail here.

Moreover, he *sprinkled* likewise with blood, both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.' If the apostle understood his own meaning then, it is manifest that, in speaking of 'divers baptisms,' he had a principal reference to the application of blood and of water by *sprinkling*."

But, *unhappily* for Dr. M., the term used in every instance he alludes to, is *rhantizo*, NOT *baptizo*. Now, if *baptizo* means a ceremonial cleansing by *sprinkling*, why was not that word used? Dr. M. knows there were *immersions* and there were *sprinklings* in the Jewish ceremonies, and that *rhantizo* is never applied to *immersions*, nor *baptizo* to sprinklings.

SECTION V.

METAPHORICAL USE OF BAPTIZO IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

ALTHOUGH, as it has been observed, the figurative use of any term can never define its literal meaning, it may be well to show how utterly hopeless, even if it were otherwise, is the task of gathering aid in favor of sprinkling from this source. There are several cases in the New Testament in which the term is used figuratively. First, that of our Lord's reference to his sufferings, in his conversation with the two disciples who sought a promise of a seat next his person in his glorious kingdom. "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" asks our Lord (Matt. xx. 22; Mark x. 38, 39); and the same expression occurs Luke xii. 50, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" No lover of Jesus can bear to think of his having been sprinkled with a few

drops of suffering! All who know his history perceive that he was immersed in suffering, but, sustained by divine power, he did not sink in the deep sea of trouble.* The term *overwhelmed*, it is true, is equally applicable; and, as a *figurative* meaning of baptism, I have no objection to admit its propriety.

The second case is the declaration of the forerunner of our Lord, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; John i. 26.) The passage in which Paul says, "Baptized by one Spirit into one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13), is presumed by Campbell and others to have the same reference—that of the miraculous influences of the Holy Spirit, communicated at the day of pentecost and on other seasons. The abounding and overwhelming character of these influences is evidently the idea of John, and we find it fully to accord with the actual fact. Under this very prediction, enforced upon their attention by our Saviour (Acts i. 4, 5), they assembled themselves together, waiting for the pentecostal day, when (Acts ii. 3, 4) "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost"—the baptism of the Holy Ghost. If we may speak with strict propriety of the overwhelming influence of a torrent of eloquence, of how much more overwhelming a character was this wondrous communication of the gift of tongues! And what term could be more appropriate than that of baptism? If a figurative expression must be further dissected to search after sprinkling or pouring, the idea is clearly, not that each apostle was filled by an individual pouring, but that, as the "*sound*" (as of a mighty wind) "filled the room," so was the room filled with the Spirit; so

* "I have indeed a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with, and know that I shall shortly be *bathed*, as it were, in blood, and *plunged* in the most overwhelming distress."—*Doddridge*, on Luke xii. 50.

that all the disciples were immersed in it, as we are constantly immersed in the air which we breathe.*

The last instance, one which has been quite a favorite with the advocates of sprinkling, is Paul's allusion to the passage of the Red Sea: "all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1 Cor. x. 2.) Macknight says, in his note on this text: "Because the Israelites, by being hid from the Egyptians under the cloud, and by passing through the Red Sea, were made to declare their belief in the Lord, and in his servant Moses' (Exod. xiv. 31), the apostle very properly represents them as baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." All the efforts pædobaptists have made have not been able to draw rain from this cloud. The noble column, which was a cloud of fire by night and of shade by day, rode triumphantly in the heavens for other and higher purposes than that of affording a last hope to the advocates of sprinkling. It was the separating effect of the cloud and the miraculous passage of the Red Sea, which divided Israel from the Egyptians, and designated them before all nations as God's people, in its analogy to baptism —which, in like manner, separates the church from the world, and designates it as God's spiritual Israel—that the apostle, in the early part of this chapter, seeks to enforce; and then, at the sixteenth verse, he takes up the other ordinance, the Lord's Supper, for the same high object. It is the moral effect, therefore, rather than the physical act of baptism, that is here referred to;† and, instead of affording the least pre-

* Cyril of Jerusalem makes baptism an emblem of the Holy Ghost's effusion upon the apostles; "for, as he that goes down into the water and is baptized, is surrounded on all sides by the water, so the apostles were baptized all over by the Spirit; the water surrounds the body externally, but the Spirit incomprehensibly baptizes the interior soul."—*Chrys. Hom.* xi. 1 *Cor.* p. 681.

† "These things which we have stated respecting mortification and ablution were adumbrated in the people of Israel, whom, *on this ac-*

tence for sprinkling infants, it proves satisfactorily that, they being as yet no part of the spiritual Israel, it is a grievous perversion of the ordinance to administer baptism to them, even by immersion.

SECTION VI.

MEANING OF BAPTIZO CONTRASTED WITH OTHER TERMS RELATING TO THE USE OF WATER.

It would be some slight argument in proof that *baptizo* might be considered as a term open to variety of meaning, if a more specific term had been in use, and yet had not been employed; but the reverse is the fact. There is a term in Greek that refers to *washing*, whether by dipping or any other mode, but that term is *louo*, NOT *baptizo*: had it been the design of Christ to leave the mode a matter of indifference, *louo* would surely have been employed. Even that term, however, would not have justified sprinkling.

For the satisfaction of all desirous to be assured of the true meaning of *baptizo*, the other Greek words relating to the use of water are now presented.

1. *Louo*, to wash the person of an individual.

2. *Pluno*, to scour or wash his clothes.

3. *Nipto*, to rinse his hands, face, or feet.

4. *Ekcheo*, to pour upon him water or oil, as they did when they anointed their priests, &c.

5. *Ballo*, (among other meanings,) to pour out rapidly, as water from a ewer or pitcher.

6. *Brecho*, to wet, moisten, rain, cause to send rain.

count, the apostle declares to have been 'baptized in the cloud and in the sea.'"—*Calvin's Institutes*, vol. ii. p. 427.

7. *Rhantizo*, to sprinkle water, &c.

The first of these words, *louo*, occurs in John xiii. 10, in contrast with *nipto*, "He that is *washed* needeth not save to *wash* his feet." The second time it is used in the New Testament is respecting the *washing* the corpse of Dorcas; the third in happy contrast to *baptizo*—"and he took them the same hour of the night, and *washed* their stripes, and was *baptized*." If the jailer was *washed* by Paul as he had washed the stripes of Paul, we should have found the same word used in both cases. The same contrast is seen in the passage, "Arise, and be *baptized*, and *wash away* thy sins" (Acts xxii. 16). "Arise, and be *washed*, and *wash away* thy sins!" say pædobaptists; "Arise, and *be purified*, and wash away thy sins!" says Mr. Beecher. An absurd tautology exists in the case of either of these mistranslations. "Arise, and be *immersed*, and wash away thy sins," is the only sense the passage can bear, in accordance with the first principles of the use of language. *Louo* occurs in contrast with *rhantizo*, in Heb. x. 22—"hearts *sprinkled* from an evil conscience . . . bodies *washed* with pure water." It occurs also in 2 Pet. ii. 22, "the sow that was *washed*;" and in Rev. i. 5, "Unto him that loved us, and *washed* us from our sins in his own blood."

Pluno occurs in Rev. vii. 14, "*washed* their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Nipto. "*Wash* thy face" (Matt. vi. 17, and xv. 2). *Wash* their hands" (Mark vii. 3). "He went his way and *washed*, and came seeing" (John ix. 7). The same term is used in all cases where *wash* occurs in the narrative of the remarkable cure alluded to. In contrast with *ballo*—"He *poureth* water into a basin, and began to *wash* his disciples' feet" (John xiii. 5); and the same verb is used wherever *wash* occurs through the passage. The last time this word occurs is 1 Tim. v. 10, "If she have *washed* the saints' feet."

Ekcheo occurs in the parable respecting "*putting* wine into new bottles" (Matt. ix. 17); where Christ "*poured out* the changers' money, and overthrew the tables," (Mark ii. 22; John ii. 15;) "I will *pour out* my Spirit upon all flesh . . . and hath *shed forth* this which ye now see and hear' (Acts ii. 17, 33); "when the blood of the martyr Stephen *was shed*" (Acts xxii. 20); "swift to *shed* blood" (Rom. iii. 15); "the Holy Ghost, which he *shed* on us abundantly" (Tit. iii. 6); and, finally, in the sixteenth chapter of the Revelation, in all the verses relating to the *pouring* out of the vials of wrath.

Brecho is the term rendered *wash* in the following passage: "And behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to *wash* his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment." Luke vii. 37, 38.

Now, there is such a manifest analogy between the dropping of tears and the method now adopted in the consecration of babes, that I cannot but think, if such had been the design of the Great Legislator instead of immersion, that this term would have been employed, instead of one doomed for ever to signify to immerse. Then Dr. Morrison could, without any danger to his fame either moral or literary, have instructed the Chinese respecting "the wetting ceremony;"* and the Seneca Indians might have still been permitted to enjoy their translation (where the word has been rendered "sprinkle") unaltered.†

* Dr. M., it is understood, thus ventured to translate the word *baptizo* in his Chinese version of the Scriptures.

† I am aware that Athanasius speaks of the "baptism of tears;" but it is a figurative expression, tantamount to "overwhelmed with sor-

Rhantizo is used in Hebrews with reference to the *sprinkling* of the unclean; "*sprinkled* both the book and the people;" "he *sprinkled* likewise with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry." *Rhantismos*, "the blood of *sprinkling*" (Heb. xii. 24); "*sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. i. 2.

I have been thus minute, that it might be apparent and undeniable that, wherever in the New Testament the idea of *washing*, without the mode of dipping being specified, is conveyed, *louo* or *nipto* is employed; wherever *pouring* is referred to, *ekcheo* or *ballo* is found, *baptizo* NEVER; wherever *sprinkling* is referred to, *rhantizo* or *brecho* is employed, *baptizo* NEVER. Is it, therefore, too much to ask, that, seeing *baptizo* is never found in the New Testament applied to sprinkling or pouring, but always to immersion, in future those who pour or sprinkle will cease to falsify the word *baptizo*, and speak of *rhantizing*, or any other word that approximates in some slight degree to the process; rather than be so absurd as to use a word *the most remote that possibly could be found in the Greek language?**

rows;" and it was an idea of the Fathers, that overwhelming distress from persecutions, which they metaphorically termed "a baptism of tears," would save without literal baptism; as also martyrdom, which, therefore, they called the "baptism of blood." It was what they deemed the saving effect of baptism, not its *mode*, that they referred to in these metaphorical expressions.

* "Now, if baptism does indeed mean *immerse*, as all admit, it must (to say the very least) be doubtful whether it can also mean to *sprinkle* or *pour*. Immerse, sprinkle, and pour, are three distinct ideas, expressed by different words in all languages. No man in his right mind would think of immersing an object, and saying he sprinkled it; or of sprinkling an object, and saying he immersed it. This remark is as applicable to the Greek as to the English. Indeed, it is well known that the Greek excels in the precision and fidelity with which it expresses different ideas, and even different shades of the same idea, by different words.

"While I filled the professorship of Ancient Languages in the Uni-

We close this section by an inquiry. If the Head of the church *had* designed to use a term prescribing immersion as specifically as possible, does the Greek language afford a word as specific as *baptizo?* In other words: Has not our Saviour employed that very word which was employed by all the writers of the Greek language, when for any purpose they intended immersion? So far as I am aware, this question has never been answered in the negative.

SECTION VII.

ANCIENT AND MODERN TRANSLATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE fact that almost every version of the Bible, ancient and modern, existing previous to 1820, has invariably, either

versity of Georgia, I had occasion to compile a table of passages where the words dip, pour, sprinkle, and wash, in their various modifications, occur in the English Bible, with the corresponding term used in the Greek of the New Testament, and the Septuagint. *Dip* I found in twenty-one passages. In all of these except *one*, *bapto* or *baptizo* is found in the Greek. The one exception is in Gen. xxxvii. 31, where Joseph's brethren took his coat and dipped—*emolunan*, smeared or daubed—it in the blood of a kid. Mark the great accuracy of the Greek here—the idea is that of smearing or daubing, and the Septuagint so expresses it.

"*Sprinkle*, in some of its forms, I found in twenty-seven passages. *In not a single instance is* BAPTO OR BAPTIZO *used in the Greek.*

"*Pour* I found in no less than one hundred and nineteen instances, *but in not even one of them did I meet with* BAPTO OR BAPTIZO *in the Greek.*

"I found *wash* in thirty-two cases, where reference was had, not to the whole person, but to a part, as the eyes, the face, the hands, the feet. *In none of these was* BAPTO OR BAPTIZO *found, but* NIPTO *invariably.*"—*President Shannon, of the College of Louisiana. Christian Preacher*, vol. iii. p. 158.

not translated the word at all, or else rendered it by a term equivalent to *dip*, is interesting and worthy of attention.

The *Old Syriac*, or Peshito, is acknowledged to be the most ancient version extant. It was translated as early as the beginning of the second century, when Syriac and Greek were both perfectly understood, and in the very country where many of the apostles spent most of their lives. This version uniformly renders *baptizo* by *amad*, which all authorities agree to be, in its ordinary meaning, identical with immerse.*

The same is true of the Ethiopic or Abyssinian, the Amharic, the Armenian, both ancient and modern, the Coptic, the Arabic, the Persian, the Turkish versions, translated at different periods from the third to the seventeenth centuries.

Of the western versions, the Latin transfers the Greek *baptizo*. The Gothic, made from the Greek in the middle of the fourth century, renders *baptizo* in all cases by *daupyan*, to dip; the German (Luther's and all other translations) uses the word *taufen*. That this word means *dip*, the testimony of Luther (which may be found at length in Section IX.) is sufficient to prove; Dr. Knapp, Professor of Theology at the University of Halle, affirms the same, and in another place he observes, "It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed."†

The German-Swiss uses *taufen*; Lower Saxon the same; Belgian, *doopen*; Danish, *dobe*, a form of *dauppyan*; Swedish, *dopa*; Welsh, *bedyddio*; all meaning to *dip*.

The Sclavonic, or old Russian, has *krestit*, "to cross;" because the form of crossing the child is used in baptism;

* For observations on Prof. Stuart's attempt to raise a doubt on this point, see Judd's Reply to Stuart, p. 164. To the Appendix to that work I am indebted for much information contained in this section.

† Knapp's Theology, translated by L. Woods, vol. ii. p. 510, 517.

in England, *baptism* and *christening*, among the members of the national church, are synonymous. "Were crossed by him in Jordan," is about as absurd as "were sprinkled by him in Jordan;" not quite, however, because the Russian *means* that John both crossed and immersed, but the modern pædobaptist means that they went up to their middle in water to be sprinkled.*

With the exception of the Sclavonic and Russian rendering *krestit*, and the Latin and English *transfer* of *baptizo*, instead of translation, all the versions existing have translated the word *baptizo* by *dip*, until within a few years. Pædobaptists, in order to be *impartial*, have now rendered the word in the Seneca language to *sprinkle* (the first time the word was ever so used); in the Chinese, "to use the wetting ceremony;" and, by way of producing a literary equilibrium with the Seneca translation, they have rendered it in the Cherokee *immerse!* Leaving modern missionary versions out of the question, there is not a solitary version, in either the Eastern or Western languages, which in the slightest degree favors any other meaning of the term *baptizo* than that of *immerse*. Better *collateral* evidence could not be desired.

* When the writer was a child, having been taught that the Bible was all true, and deeming the *pictures* in the Bible by no means an unimportant part of the book, he for some time was firm in this same faith, for such was the pictorial representation of John baptizing Jesus: and, without breach of candor, it may be apprehended that such pictures still are a source of authority to many youthful minds in favor of the practice alluded to.

SECTION VIII.

BRIEF REFERENCE TO CHURCH HISTORY.

In another chapter we shall, from the writings of the Fathers, prove that immersion alone, in the earliest ages, was practised in baptism—that afterwards pouring or sprinkling was allowed only in case of the dangerous illness of an unbaptized person—that the whole of the Greek church, and all the eastern churches, dip to this day—that sprinkling had its origin amidst the most absurd doctrinal errors and superstitious practices—that, except in cases of danger, no other mode but immersion was *authorized* throughout the christian church for the first thirteen hundred years—that this authority, when it occurred, was from Antichrist—and that all who sprinkle have to trace their practice to that polluted fountain. I mention these points here, only for their indirect support to the correctness of the views taken of the meaning of the term. One point is at least of decisive moment—the Greeks in all ages so understood the Greek verb *baptizo*; and the testimony of the Greek nation and church through all ages to the meaning of the term, is sufficient alone to overthrow the speculations of the few pædobaptist professors on either side of the Atlantic who endeavor to sustain a contrary opinion.

It gives me pleasure to do justice to the candor of Dr. Woods in one point at least—the testimony of church history in favor of immersion; the more so, because, in considering the circumstances attending the baptisms mentioned in the New Testament, he has (without notifying his students of the fact) in almost every instance given his opinion directly

in opposition to those of the early fathers, and the great and the candid pædobaptists of the past and present age—Luther, Calvin, Doddridge, Neander, and many others. I would request those who have read Dr. Woods's Lectures to obtain those of Dr. Doddridge, which will be found in his Miscellaneous Works, that they may have before them a striking specimen of the candor of the past age, as contrasted with the sectarian spirit of the present. Dr. Woods is, however, inconceivably more careful of the truth of history than Dr. Miller, as the following admission testifies.

"Our Baptist brethren undertake to prove from ecclesiastical history, that immersion was the prevailing mode of baptism in the ages following the apostles. I acknowledge that ecclesiastical history clearly proves this. And I am very willing to acknowledge also, that immersion might be one of the modes of baptism, and perhaps the prevailing one, used in the time of Christ and the apostles, and that the Christians in the following ages probably derived it from them. This is acknowledging quite as much as can be fairly proved.

"In regard to this argument from ecclesiastical history, I remark, first, that it is the only clear and certain proof in favor of immersion as the mode of christian baptism. It must be apparent that no such proof can be found in the Scriptures. For the Scriptures nowhere declare, as the ecclesiastical writers do, that baptism was performed by *immersion*. They nowhere describe the mode."

That is, they nowhere say they were immersed by immersion! The learned Doctor forgot that he had, a few pages before, admitted that *immerse* was the common signification of the word; while he maintains, "there may be sufficient reason why a religious rite, though denoted by a word in common use, should not be performed in a manner exactly conforming" with that meaning. Still, if *baptizo* usually meant *immerse* it satisfactorily accounts for the

evangelists using no other term to describe the action; to have done so would have thrown a doubt on the meaning of the word itself, for which there is happily no ground whatever.

SECTION IX.

TESTIMONY OF PÆDOBAPTIST AUTHORS.

"The point at issue is," says Professor Pond, "in a few words, this:—Is IMMERSION ESSENTIAL TO THE ORDINANCE? Our Baptist brethren contend that it is. They tell us that the idea of immersion enters into the very *nature* of baptism; that the terms baptism and immersion are *equivalent and interchangeable*.' 'The meaning of the word (baptize) is always the same, and *it always signifies to dip. It never has any other meaning*.' All Baptists hold that *there can be no baptism without immersion*, that *this is essential to the ordinance*. To this point, therefore, all their reasonings ought to tend. Whatever they may offer to show that immersion is a valid mode of baptism, or even the most proper mode, or that it was frequently practised in ancient times, has no direct bearing on the controversy, and no tendency to bring it to a close. Let them prove what we deny, that *immersion is essential to baptism—so essential that there can be no baptism without it*, and our differences on the subject are at an end." —That is, is *immersion* essential to *immersion?* Or may *sprinkling* be termed *immersion?* If the true and proper meaning of *baptizo* is to *immerse*, then immersion only is baptism. On this point

* Treatise on Christian Baptism, p. 14.

I will produce pædobaptist testimony that Professor Pond will not dispute.

The last class of proofs that *baptizo*, when used by the New Testament writers, means to immerse, will be from pædobaptist authors themselves. The question is not now—Is sprinkling *admissible* as a substitute or modification of immersion? But simply, When Christ used the word *baptizo*, did he *command* immersion? Neither is it now the question, whether the church had the right to alter immersion into sprinkling; but simply, What did Christ mean to be done, when he employed the word *baptizo*?

Now, I affirm, with the statements of professors Woods, Pond, and Miller before me, that the great majority of learned writers among pædobaptists themselves assert that the true meaning of *baptizo* is to immerse. This is the case with most learned English authors who have investigated this subject; but especially, have almost all the German philologists, commentators, and ecclesiastical historians, expressed themselves most decidedly on this point. Neither Dr. Woods nor Dr. Miller will venture to deny, that the Germans stand far above all other nations in their authority as to language or history, however we may demur to their claims as philosophers and theologians. On this point it is sufficient to state, that, with respect to the Greek language, both classic and sacred, three-fourths of the lexicography and critical notes used in England and America are of German origin; and that their researches in ecclesiastical history are so highly esteemed as to be translated into English, and used as text-books in our colleges. Surrounded as are the German professors with original documents, trained in the keenest school of criticism, and favored with leisure for investigation, it were strange indeed, were not their authority in a matter of language and history (in a case in which their testimony must be deemed impartial) admitted to outweigh a few pædobaptist

professors among us, who have a special object to answer in their statements respecting the meaning of this word. So contrary is the testimony of these great scholars to their wishes, that the professors of our pædobaptist colleges are actually in a dilemma respecting the translation of the critical and historical works of the German pædobaptists—a specimen of which will occur in a following chapter.

The German writers of the era of the Reformation will be first introduced; and, strange as it may seem to many readers, they will find that Calvin *admits* the true meaning of *baptizo* to be *immerse*, and that Luther firmly, and even warmly, advocates the restoration of immersion, *because the word means dip.*

Calvin.—"The word *baptizo* signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."*

Luther.—"Baptism is a Greek word, and may be translated *immersion*, as when we immerse something in water that it may be wholly covered. And, although it is almost wholly abolished (for they do not *dip* the whole children, but only pour a little water on them), they ought nevertheless to be wholly immersed, and then immediately drawn out; for that *the etymology of the word seems to demand.*" "The Germans call baptism *taufF*, from *a depth*, which in their language they call *teff*, because it is proper that those who are baptized be deeply immersed."† In the Smalcald articles (drawn up by him) Luther says, (Art. V.) "Baptism is nothing else than the word of God with immersion in water." And again he says: "Washing from sins is attributed to baptism; it is truly indeed attributed, but the signification is too soft and slow to express baptism, which is rather a sign both of death and resurrection. Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are to be baptized to

* Institutes, lib. v. chap. xv. § 2.
† Luth. Op. vol. i. p. 336.

be altogether dipt into the water, as the word doth sound, and the mystery doth signify."*

That this was the opinion and practice of the chief leader of the Reformation, appears also by JOHANNES BUGENHAGIUS POMERANIUS, in a book he published A. D. 1542. He was desired to be a witness of a baptism at Hamburgh, in the year 1529; where, "when having seen the minister only sprinkle the infant, wrapped in swathling clothes, on the top of the head, he was amazed; because he had neither heard nor seen any such thing, nor yet read in any history, except in case of necessity in bedrid persons. In a general assembly, therefore, of all the ministers of the word that was convened, he did ask of a certain minister, John Fritz by name, who was some time minister of Lubec, how the sacrament of baptism was administered at Lubec. Who, for his piety and candor, did answer gravely, that infants were baptized naked at Lubec, after the same fashion altogether as in Germany. But from whence and how that peculiar method of baptizing hath crept into Hamburgh, he was ignorant. At length they did agree among themselves that the judgment of Luther, and of the divines of Wirtemburg, should be demanded about this point; which being done, Luther did write back to Hamburgh that this sprinkling was an abuse which they ought to remove. Thus plunging was restored to Hamburgh."†

Perhaps no man deserves more respect as a candid and well-informed critic than BEZA. He observes on Mark vii. 4, "Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word it is certain immersion is signified. *Baptizesthai*, in this

* "There is nothing in the thing signified by baptism which renders immersion more necessary or proper than any other mode of applying water!"—*Dr. Miller*, p. 67. If pædobaptists prefer Dr. Miller's opinion to Martin Luther's, they will pardon me for not admiring their taste.

† Crosby's Hist. Eng. Bapt. Pref. p. 21.

place, is more than *niptein*; because *that* seems to respect the whole body, *this* only the hands. Nor does *baptizein* signify to wash, except by consequence; for it properly signifies to immerse for the sake of dyeing. To be baptized in water signifies no other than to be immersed in water, which is the external ceremony of baptism. *Baptizo* differs from the verb *dunai*, which signifies to plunge in the deep, and to drown."*

Vitringa.—"The act of baptizing is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his apostles."†

Hospinianus.—"Christ commanded us to be baptized; by which word it is certain immersion is signified."‡

Gurtlerus.—"To *baptize*, among the Greeks, is undoubtedly to immerse, to dip: and baptism is immersion, dipping. *Baptismos en Pneumati hagio, baptism in the Holy Spirit*, is immersion into the pure waters of the Holy Spirit; for he on whom the Holy Spirit is poured out is, as it were, immersed into him. *Baptismos en puri, baptism in fire*, is a figurative expression, and signifies casting into a flame, which, like water, flows far and wide, such as the flame that consumed Jerusalem. The thing commanded by our Lord is baptism—immersion in water."§

Buddeus.—"The words *baptizein* and *baptismos* are not to be interpreted of aspersion, but always of immersion."‖

Salmasius.—"*Baptism* is immersion, and was administered in former times according to the force and meaning of the word."¶

* Epistola II. ad Thom. Tilium. Annotat. in Marc. vii. 4, &c.
† Aphor. Sanct. Theol. Aphoris. 884.
‡ Hist. Sacram. lib. ii. c. i. p. 30.
§ Institut. Theo. cap. xxxiii. § 108, 109, 110, 115.
‖ Theolog. Dogmat. lib. v. c. i. § 5.
¶ De Cæsarie Virorum, p. 669.

VENEMA.—"The word *baptizein*, to baptize, is nowhere used in the scripture for sprinkling."*

Extracts from German writers of the age of the Reformation, and a few years subsequent, might be greatly multiplied; but it would be superfluous.

I shall next adduce the opinions of the modern German critics, or ecclesiastical historians. For most of them I am indebted to President Sears, either through his very able article in the Christian Review, or to translations from still more recent German writers, which now appear for the first time, and for which the Author feels greatly indebted.

Professor FRITSCHE, a disciple of Hermann, in his Com. on Matt. iii. 6, says, "That baptism was performed, *not by sprinkling*, but by *immersion*, is evident, not only *from the nature of the word*, but from Rom. vi. 4."

AUGUSTI, vol. v. p. 5.—"The word 'baptism,' *according to etymology and usage*, signifies *to immerse, submerge*, &c.; *and the choice of the expression betrays an age in which the later custom of sprinkling had not been introduced.*"

BRENNER, p. 1.—"The word corresponds in signification with the German word *taufen, to sink into the deep.*"

The Author of the Free Inquiry respecting Baptism, Leipsic, 1802.—"Baptism is *perfectly identical* with our word immersion, or submersion (*tauchen oder untertauchen*). If immersion under water is for the purpose of cleansing or washing, then the word means cleansing or washing." p. 7.

BRETSCHNEIDER, in his Theology of 1828, vol. ii. p. 673 and 681.—"An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism." "*This is the meaning of the word.*" This writer is confessedly the most critical lexicographer of the New Testament.

* Instit. Hist. Eccl. Vet. et Nov. Test. Tom. III. sec. i. § 139.

PAULUS, in his Com., vol. i. p. 278, says, "the word 'baptize' signifies, in Greek, sometimes *to immerse*, sometimes *to submerge*."

RHEINHARD'S Ethics, vol. v. p. 79.—"In sprinkling, the symbolical meaning of the ordinance is *wholly lost*."

"Professor ROST, the principal Greek lexicographer now living, in his standard German-Greek Lexicon, revised with the assistance of a native Greek, puts down, as the *primary* signification of all such words as *plunge*, *immerse*, and *submerge* (*tauchen*, *eintauchen*, *untertauchen*, *bapto*; but under the words *wash*, *wet*, *pour*, and the like (*waschen*, *benetzen*, *giessen*, *begiessen*), though he gives copious definitions in Greek, he *never* employs the word *bapto*, or any of its derivatives. Can any thing be more to the point?"[1]

SCHLEUSNER, in his Lex. on *baptisma*.—"Those who were to be baptized were anciently immersed." Indeed, the three New Testament lexicographers, Schleusner, Wahl, and Bretschneider, *limit* baptism as a sacred ordinance to immersion.

SCHOLZ, on Matt. iii. 6.—"Baptism consists in the immersion of the whole body in water."

Professor LANGE, on Infant Baptism, 1834, p. 81.—"Baptism in the apostolic age was a proper baptism—the immersion of the body in water."—"As Christ died, so we die (to sin) with him in baptism. The body is, as it were, buried under water, is dead with Christ; the plunging under water represents death, and rising out of it the resurrection to a new life. A more striking symbol could not be chosen."

The Author of the Free Inquiry on Baptism, p. 36. "The baptism of John and that of the apostles were performed in precisely the same way," *i. e., the candidate was completely immersed under water*. Speaking of Rom. vi. 4, and Gal. iii. 27, he says, "What becomes of all these

[1] Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 97.

beautiful images, when, as at the present day, baptism is administered by pouring or sprinkling?"

ROSENMULLER and KOPPE hold the same strong language on this subject. We will quote their sentiments as given by BLOOMFIELD.

In his Critical Digest on Rom. vi. 4, he says, "There is here plainly a reference to the ancient mode of baptism by immersion; and *I agree with Koppe and Rosenmüller, that there is reason to regret it should have been abandoned* in most Christian churches, especially as it has so evidently a reference to the mystic sense of baptism."

BRETSCHNEIDER.*—"In the word *baptizo* and *baptisma* is contained the idea of a complete immersion under water; at least so is *baptisma* in the New Testament."

RHEINHARD rightly says, that "*baptismos* may also signify every common purification, but *baptisma* is used only at religious immersion."

I shall conclude the testimony of modern German scholars by that of NEANDER, whose amiable candor adds lustre to his fame as a historian. In his letter to Mr. Judd he observes: "As to your question on the original rite of baptism, *there can be no doubt whatever that in the primitive times it was performed by immersion*, to signify a complete immersion into the new principle of the divine life which was to be imparted by the Messiah."†

From numerous English writers I shall present only selections from Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity, and Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, works of great research and high authority; from Dr. Wall, whose efforts in the cause of pædobaptism have never been equalled; the opinion of Professor Porson, of Cambridge, one of the most profound Greek scholars of his age; of Dr. Johnson, whose

* Theology. Leipsic, 1830, vol. ii. p. 681.

† Judd's Reply to Stuart, p. 194.

authority as a linguist will not be disputed; of Dr. Chalmers, whose attachment to the Scotch kirk, with its erroneous practice, manifests the impartiality of his testimony; and of the editors of the Edinburgh Encyclopædia. All must surely be deemed impartial witnesses in this cause.

DR. CAVE.—"The party to be baptized was wholly immersed, or put under water; whereby they did more notably and significantly express the three great ends and effects of baptism."*

BINGHAM.—"All persons were anciently divested in order to be baptized; yet the administration was so arranged as to avoid any want of proper decorum and solemnity; for men and women were either baptized at separate places, or at different times; also deaconesses were always in attendance upon the female catechumens. Persons thus divested were usually baptized by immersion, or dipping of their whole bodies under water, to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And, as this was the original apostolic practice, so it continued to be the universal practice of the church for many ages, upon the same symbolical reasons as it was first used by the apostles."†

DR. WALL.‡—"As to the manner of baptism then generally used, the text books produced by every one that speaks of these matters, John iii. 23, Mark i. 5, Acts viii. 38, are undeniable proofs that the baptized person went ordinarily into the water, and sometimes the baptist too. We should not know from these accounts whether the whole body of the baptized was put under water, head and all, were it not for two later proofs, which seem to me to *put it out of*

* Primit. Christ. Part I. chap. x. p. 203.

† Antiquities of the Christian Church, vol. iii. 269, b. xi. ch. xi.

‡ Vicar of Shoreham, in Kent, and author of the "History of Infant Baptism," for which he received the thanks of the whole clergy in convocation.

question. One, that St. Paul does twice, in an allusive way of speaking, call baptism a *burial. The other*, the custom of the Christians in the near succeeding times, which, being more largely and particularly delivered in books, is known to have been, generally or ordinarily, a *total immersion.**

PR. PORSON.—"Not long before the death of Professor Porson," says Dr. Newman, "I went in company with a much-respected friend, to see that celebrated Greek scholar at the London Institution. I was curious to hear in what manner he read Greek. He very condescendingly, at my request, took down a Greek Testament, and read, perhaps, twenty verses in one of the gospels, in which the word *bapto* occurred. I said, 'Sir, you know there is a controversy among Christians respecting the meaning of that word.' He smiled and replied, 'The baptists have the advantage of us!' He cited immediately the well-known passage in Pindar, and one or two of those in the gospels mentioned in this letter. I inquired whether, in his opinion, *baptizo* must be considered equal to *bapto*, which he said was to tinge, as dyers. He replied to this effect—that, if there be a difference, he should take the former to be the strongest. He fully assured me that it signified a *total immersion.*"†

DR. JOHNSON, when arguing with a friend in palliation of the Romish innovation to which Dr. Whitby alludes (that of taking the cup from the laity), observed: "They may think that, in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience; and I think they are as well warranted to make this alteration as we are to substitute sprinkling in the room of the ancient baptism."

DR. CHALMERS, when commenting on the passage in the sixth chapter of Romans in which the expression occurs,

* Defence of the Hist. of Inf. Bap. p. 131.

† Carson, p. 23.

"buried with him by baptism," observes, "The original meaning of the word 'baptism' is *immersion*; and though we regard it as a point of indifference whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way, or by sprinkling, yet we doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the apostles' days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water."*

EDINBURGH ENCY.—"In the time of the apostles the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or vessel, with the words which Christ had ordered; and, to express more fully his change of character, generally assumed a new name. The immersion of the whole body was omitted only in the case of the sick who could not leave their beds. In this case sprinkling was substituted, which was called *clinic baptism*. The Greek church, as well as the schismatics in the East, retained the custom of immersing the whole body; but the Western church adopted, in the thirteenth century, the mode of baptism by sprinkling, which has been continued by the protestants, Baptists only excepted."†

The testimony of Macknight and other Scottish authorities might have been added, but I forbear. Some of them will appear in other portions of the work.

If the meaning of *baptizo* has been so plain to great divines and scholars who practised sprinkling, upon the ground, as Calvin says, that, if they "ALTERED the *mode*," they "lost none of the substance;" it is reasonable that those whose practice is still in accordance with the plain meaning of the term should be called upon, in these "last times," to admit a meaning which the most eminent of their practical opponents in all ages have not hesitated to declare to be false? Is it unreasonable to request those who have believed Dr. Mil-

* Chalmers' Lectures on Romans, ch. vi.

† Edinburgh Ency. Art. Baptism.

ler, to compare the mass of testimony here adduced with his authoritative assurance, that "the most profound and mature Greek scholars agree in pronouncing that the term in question imports the application of water by sprinkling?" Is it worth while for a "Professor of Ecclesiastical History," for the sake of imposing upon those under his spiritual authority or influence, to expose himself to the contempt of the whole literary world?

I might have added to this chapter a section on the circumstances in which baptism is stated to have been administered in the sacred record; but, as this would have been to anticipate the observations on the passages as they occur in the writings of the New Testament, I shall for the present content myself with affirming, in the language of one of our candid opponents, that "the circumstances recorded concerning the first administration of baptism are incompatible with sprinkling."

CHAPTER II.

TESTIMONY FROM THE EVANGELISTS.

BAPTISM stands as the door to Christianity, as a public profession in every stage of its development. Mark styles the ministry of John "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Mark i. 1), and John "came baptizing." The Son of God himself was baptized, on his entrance on the work of his public ministration. Immediately his disciples began to make converts under his authority, we find them baptizing. And, finally, when Christ gave his last great command to his disciples to preach the gospel to every creature, the injunction to baptize was incorporated with it. Are these facts compatible with the idea so frequently thrown out, that the subject of baptism is one of small importance, and unworthy of the attention bestowed upon it? Each of the four connexions in which baptism is presented to us in the writings of the evangelists will form a distinct topic for investigation.

SECTION I.

BAPTISM OF JOHN.

THE brief hour of dawn precedes the light of day. The sun arises veiled by the mists of earth; till at length its power dispels them, and its rays burst forth with unimpeded refulgence. The preaching of John the Baptist was the dawn of the glorious day of Christianity. In the personal ministry

of our Saviour the sun of righteousness arose: but, so dense were the mists of prejudice on the minds of his disciples, that he unveiled but little of his glory even to them; and the instructions he did give were but very imperfectly comprehended, till the "mighty rushing wind," the symbol of the Spirit's power, cleared the clouds which, till the pentecostal day, had enveloped their minds. But is not the dawn a part of the day? The evangelist evidently thought so, when he affirmed that "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," was "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

The ministry of John, by divine appointment, began the great change from night to day. The patriarchs and prophets were stars amidst the dark heavens; but John was as the light of the sun, which, though not yet risen, still fills the heavens with a glow which presages his glorious appearing. In this view only can the saying of our Lord be justly appreciated, "What went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, much more than a prophet. Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." (Luke vii. 26, 28.) In what respects was John superior to Isaiah and Daniel? Only as partaking, though in a faint degree, of the splendor that was associated with the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh; and, when our Lord adds, "but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he"—the least of the apostles (the direct rays of the Saviour's glory) is greater than John (the strongest light of the dawn)—the relation of the ministry of John, and of all connected with it, to the christian dispensation, seems to be fixed by Christ himself, with a precision which should have precluded the discussions which have been continually carried on respecting it.

This view exactly accords with the great topics of the preaching of this "more than a prophet"—repentance, and

faith in Him that was immediately to come forth in his public character as the Messiah. The dawn is the essential change from night: the day is but the increase (great indeed) of the *same light*. The light of John was that of the Saviour already in the world, but not manifested to it. It was no "shadow," like the Mosaic economy. His teachings were not mingled, like those of the prophets, with predictions and promises peculiarly Judaic, but were filled with the same element of universality which distinguished the preaching of Him whose shoe's latchet he declared himself unworthy to unloose. His ministration had the same direct tendency, if not in so luminous a degree, as that of the apostles, to attract attention to Christ: the one prospectively, the other retrospectively. The saying of the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must decrease," beautifully accords with the figure employed. The light of dawn is lost amid the powerful effusion of the rising, though beclouded sun; but it is still the same light.

If the preaching of John was the "beginning of the gospel," then was the baptism of John the beginning of christian baptism, not baptism fully developed, but baptism *begun*. The baptism of Christ himself, and the disciples of Jesus immediately afterwards baptizing by his authority, connect the baptism of John inseparably with the final commission of our Lord. There surely was no dispensation between the Mosaic and the Christian. The ministry of John must belong to one or the other: if to the former, John was *not* "more than a prophet;" if to the latter, it is no objection that he was "less" than the least of those who enjoyed the pentecostal day, which has never set, and never will set on the Christian church. I regard the baptism of John as Christian baptism in a state incompletely developed, yet with all its elements of character strongly marked.

I am aware, in taking this view, that it is in opposition to

that of one of the greatest and best men that have adorned this or any other age, whose transient acquaintance will ever be remembered by the writer, like a gleam of sunshine amid a day of storms. That celebrated author regards the baptism of John and that of Christ as "two distinct institutes."* He remarks, in his characteristic style:—

"It will possibly be asked, If the rite which the forerunner of our Lord administered is not to be considered as a Christian institute, to what dispensation are we to assign it, since it is manifestly no part of the economy of Moses? We reply, that it was the symbol of a peculiar dispensation, which was neither entirely legal nor evangelical, but occupied an intermediate station, possessing something of the character and attributes of both; a kind of twilight, equally removed from the obscurity of the first, and the splendor of the last and perfect economy of religion.

"*The law and the prophets were till John;* his mission constituted a distinct era, and placed the nation to which he was sent in circumstances materially different from its preceding or subsequent state. It was the era of preparation; it was a voice which, breaking through a long silence, announced the immediate approach of the *desire of all nations, the messenger of the covenant in whom they delighted.*

"In announcing this event as at hand, and establishing a rite unknown to the law, expressive of that purity of heart and reformation of life which were the only suitable preparations for his reception, he stood alone, equally severed from the choir of the prophets and the company of the apostles: and the light which he emitted, though it greatly surpassed every preceding illumination, was of short duration, being soon eclipsed and extinguished by that ineffable effulgence before which nothing can retain its splendor."†

* Works of the Rev. Robert Hall, vol. ii. p. 20, London edition.

† Hall's Works, vol. ii. pp. 39, 40.

This is indeed a beautiful passage: but is its argument sound? In what respect did the ministry of John the Baptist "possess something of the attributes and character" of the "Mosaic dispensation," any more than did that of the apostles, who were "orderly keepers of the law?" (Acts xxi. 24.) How can it be said "that the light which he emitted was of short duration? However much additional light was exhibited in the ministry of the apostles, did not every sentiment that John uttered constitute a portion of their ministrations? The twilight of evening may be eclipsed by the brilliancy of the orb of night, but the dawn of the morning surely cannot be said to be eclipsed by the rising sun! Which illustration best suits the subject under consideration, I leave the reader to decide. Against the introduction of a third era—a kind of purgatorial dispensation—for the purpose of dissevering the ministry of John from its connexion with the gospel dispensation, I protest, as an act of injustice to one who performed the greatest act of Christian baptism which ever has occurred, or ever can occur—the baptism of the great founder of Christianity.

Unsatisfactory as is the whole argument of Mr. Hall (and he has done all that can be done on this point), there is one circumstance connected with his management of this part of the controversy which excites my surprise; he has never once alluded to the main support of the position he is opposing—the connecting link which the fact of Christ's baptizing (not that he baptized personally, "but his disciples," which was justly held to be tantamount to it) immediately after his own baptism by John, constitutes between John's baptism and that of the apostles. On the contrary, he speaks as though Christ had never authorized any baptism till after his resurrection. "The commission to baptize all nations, which was executed by the apostles after our Saviour's resurrection, *originated in his express com-*

mand."* There is, indeed, an express command *confirming and instructing* the apostles in the practice of baptizing believers; but where the command *originating* it is recorded I am at a loss to perceive, unless it be in the language of John the Baptist, "He that sent me to baptize."

Again—"But a Christian ordinance, not founded on the authority of Christ, not the effect but the means of his manifestation, and which was executed by one who knew him not, is to me an incomprehensible mystery."†

It is true, John's baptism *began* without Christ's direct authority (although that of his Father ought, in all that concerns this matter, to be regarded as his own‡); but it is not true that it ceased before it had received his most decided sanction. At all events John had our Lord's own authority for baptizing himself; and candour would seem to demand the acknowledgment that the baptism of our Saviour threw more lustre on the administrator and the ordinance, than it did on the participator. For one, I must have yet better arguments before I part with the idea that I have been baptized with *the same baptism*, as well as partaken of the same communion, as that which my great Master and Teacher not only instituted and enjoined, but of which he personally partook.

To a large class of the advocates of pædobaptism the testimony of Calvin, who was the originator alike of their creed and their form of government, will be regarded as entitled, perhaps, to as much weight as the opinions of Dr. Miller.§ "Hence also it is very certain, that the ministry of John was precisely the same as that which was afterwards committed to the apostles. For their baptism was

* Hall's Works, vol. ii. p. 20. † Ibid. p. 21

‡ "He that sent me to baptize," &c., John i. 33.

§ "It is *certain* that John's baptism was not Christian baptism," p. 38.

not different, though it was administered by different hands; but the sameness of their doctrine shows their baptism to have been the same. John and the apostles agreed in the same doctrine. Both baptized to repentance, both to remission of sins; both baptized in the name of Christ, from whom repentance and remission of sins proceed. John said of Christ, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;' thus acknowledging and declaring him to be the sacrifice acceptable to the Father, the procurer of righteousness, and the author of salvation. What could the apostles add to this confession? Wherefore let no one be disturbed by the attempts of the ancient writers to distinguish and separate one baptism from the other; for their authority ought not to have weight enough to shake our confidence in the scripture. For who will attend to Chrysostom, who denies that remission of sins was included in the baptism of John, rather than to Luke, who, on the contrary, affirms that 'John came preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins?' Nor must we admit that subtlety of Augustine, 'that in the baptism of John sins were remitted in hope, but in the baptism of Christ they were remitted in fact.' For, as the evangelist clearly testifies that John in his baptism preached the remission of sins, why should we diminish this commendation, when no necessity constrains us to it? But, if any difference be sought for in the word of God, the only difference that will be found is, that John baptized in the name of him who was to come, the apostles in the name of him who had already manifested himself."

I shall now proceed to notice more particularly the passages as they occur in the evangelists relating to the baptism of John, both with respect to the persons baptized,* and the places and circumstances of their baptism.

* "It doth not appear that John baptized any persons of rank and

As an historical fact, it is beyond dispute that John baptized those only who professed repentance and faith in the Messiah, either as about to come, or as already made manifest.* Matthew and Mark declare the persons baptized to

fortune. No great names were seen among his converts. The Pharisees in reputation for piety, and the lawyers famous for their knowledge of the law, rejected the counsel of God by John, and were not baptized by him. This, however, to such as know the men, doth not form even a prejudice in disfavor of the ministry of John.

"It is generally supposed John baptized great multitudes. His converts, indeed, were of the multitude, but it is far from being clear that they were very numerous. All Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region round about, *went out to him;* many of the Pharisees and Sadducees *came to his baptism*, but they went only as spectators. They *went out*, as the Lord Jesus expresses it, *for to see;* and this will appear most worthy of belief to such as consider the general character of the Jewish populace and their blind guides, and the pre-requisites necessary to John's baptism, especially when it is observed, that after the resurrection of Jesus (and it is supposed all Christians saw him) the greatest number of believers assembled together at any one time were not many above five hundred. John's disciples were of the common people, of that class of mankind which, of all others, is most friendly to free inquiry.

"In the kingdom of heaven, which John was forming, rank was nothing, superior faculties were nothing; moral excellence was all in all, and faith and repentance were indispensable qualifications for baptism: for on John's part there was no collusion, on that of his converts no blind credulity, and the individuals whom the Baptist formed into *a people* were distinguished by three characters—a character of freedom, a character of piety, and a character of virtue."—*Robinson's Hist. Bapt.* p. 26.

* Mr. Hall and others appear to overlook the fact that John baptized into the faith of Christ already come, as truly as the disciples could at any time have done. That John and the disciples of Christ were baptizing at the same time in the name of Christ, will be apparent from John iii. 22, 25–30, and iv. 1–3. When the disciples of John felt some jealousy respecting Christ, because "the same baptized, and all men came unto him," John, in his reply, styled himself "the friend of the bridegroom," and assures his disciples that he is "not the Christ, but sent before him."

It cannot be doubted, therefore, that, as John had before baptized in

be those "confessing their sins." (Matt. iii. 6; Mark i. 5.) Luke represents John as exhorting those who proposed themselves for baptism to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke iii. 8), and as adding yet further, as though with an express design to remove from their minds all idea of the ordinance of baptism being connected with hereditary qualifications, "Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our Father:" the requisites for this ordinance are of a purely moral, and therefore personal character. After this explanation, people of different classes, publicans, soldiers, and others, inquired—"What shall we do, then," as a proof of the sincerity of our penitence? And John proceeded to give them directions adapted to the peculiarities of their several circumstances.

It is characteristic, then, of the very "beginning of the gospel," to "lay the axe to the root of the tree" of hereditary privileges in religious matters; and the ordinance of baptism, as in the hands of John, not only evidently partakes of the same great moral characteristic, but appears especially adapted and designed to set it boldly and prominently before the public mind.

To avoid the natural and inevitable consequence, that the Christian dispensation cannot possibly be supposed to retrograde, and to become more Judaic in its fuller development, pædobaptists generally deny that John was the "beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ;"* and it is much to be re-

the name of "Him that was to come," so now he administered the ordinance in the name of Christ.

It would be well, that the reader may understand thoroughly the whole bearing of John's baptism, for him to read all the passages in connexion relating to the subject. As the volume containing them is always at hand, a reference to them will be sufficient:—Matt. iii. 1–12; xi. 9–14; xxi. 25, 26; Mark i. 4–8; xi. 30–32; Luke iii. 1–18; vii. 27–30; xx. 4–6; John i. 6, 7, 22–28; iii. 23–30.

* Dr. Adam Clarke, however, admits that the ordinance as adminis-

gretted that they have been aided in this vain attempt by the elegant writer alluded to, whose zeal in defence of his favorite theory has, for once, led him astray from sound logical deductions from the facts of history. As an ever watchful guard, however, over the ordinance of baptism, the words of John still stand in all their original force in the sacred record. It were well if some faithful friend to truth would aid them to lift their voice aloud, whenever the initiatory ordinance is administered to babes—"Say not within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father."

John came "preaching in the wilderness of Judea." The term "wilderness," or "desert," as used in scripture, by no means generally denotes a dry or barren spot. David sings of "the beauty of the desert," Psa. lxv. 12, 13. Scarcely any town in the Holy Land was without its "wilderness," or common lands for pasturage and timber. The wilderness of Judea extended from Jericho to the mountains of Edom, south of the Dead Sea; of necessity embracing a considerable portion of the course of the Jordan, which river constitutes John's principal baptistery.

Some have ventured to suppose that, during a great part of the year, the Jordan did not contain water enough to immerse the human body. Mr. Robinson justly observes on this:—

"The river Jordan, far from wanting water, was subject to two sorts of floods, one periodical, at harvest time, in which it resembled the Nile in Egypt, with which some supposed it had a subterraneous communication. When this flood came down the river rose many feet, and overflowed the lower banks, so that the lions that lay in the thickets there were roused, and fled. To this Jeremiah alludes, *Behold, the king of Babylon shall come up, like a lion*

tered by John was the "initiatory ordinance of the Christian dispensation."—*Commentary*, Matt. iii. 13.

from the swelling of Jordan. The other *swellings* of Jordan were casual, and resembled those of all other rivers in uneven countries."*

The following description of what may be termed the physical geography of John's baptism, from the pen of Mr. Robinson, fully sustains the fact of John's itineracy being always within convenient distance of natural baptisteries.

"John, setting out from the place of his birth, Hebron, a city in the hilly part of the tribe of Judah, two and twenty miles from Jerusalem, traveling northward, and leaving Tekoa, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem on the left, went toward Bethhogla, Engedi, Gilgal, and Jericho, taking his road through the wilderness of Judah, near the banks of the lake Asphaltites, and crying (or preaching) to the inhabitants of the towns, arrived at that part of the wilderness which was bounded on the east by the river Jordan, which met him, as it were, running along-side full south, and hereabouts fixed his first baptismal station. The word 'wilderness' did not signify in Judea an uninhabited country, but woody, grazing lands, in distinction from arable fields, which were champaign or open, and vineyards, olive-yards, orchards, and gardens, which were inclosed. There were in the time of Joshua, six cities with their villages in this wilderness, and the inhabitants of those parts were graziers and sheep-masters.

"All the evangelists affirm John baptized in Jordan. Mark, who says he baptized in Jordan, says also, he baptized in the *wilderness*. Of course he baptized in that part of the river which bounded the lands of Benjamin and Judah on the east, about four or five miles above the mouth where it discharged itself into the lake Asphaltites, and where the woodlands of Judah abutted on those of Benjamin. The river here was about seven miles east of Jericho, and about

* Hist. Bapt. p. 9.

twenty-five or six east of Jerusalem. Hereabouts the Israelites passed over Jordan; and about half a mile from the river the remains of a convent, dedicated to John the Baptist, are yet to be seen; for the Syrian monks availed themselves of the zeal of early pilgrims, who aspired at the honor of being baptized where they supposed John had baptized Jesus. The Greeks have imagined a place three or four miles distant; others have supposed it higher up the stream northward, toward Galilee; and others again, the passage right over against Jericho; but some ford a little nearer the mouth, somewhere about the lines that parted the lands of Benjamin and Judah, seems best to agree with the account given by the evangelists, and it exactly agrees with the ancient geography; for the line that parted the two tribes ran through a place called Bethbarah, in the wilderness of Judah, or the house at the ford next the woodlands.

"In such rivers there are shallows in the greatest floods, and in the greatest droughts there are, in various parts of their beds, a kind of natural cisterns, perfectly clean, and every way convenient for the baptism of immersion."*

Error of all kinds is built upon suppositions, truth upon facts; and the fact is John *did* baptize *in* Jordan, (*en to Jordano potamo*) "*in* the river Jordan." Mr. Pengilly (in his excellent tract on baptism) suggests, that "John took the inhabitants of Jerusalem, not to the brook Cedron which ran hard by the city, but to the distant large river of Jordan;" but this is unnecessary straining. So far as water is concerned, the pools and public watering-places of Jerusalem were amply sufficient to have baptized all its inhabitants in a short time; but the crowd would have been excessively inconvenient, and might have engendered public disturbance. For the former reason, Baptist ministers in our large cities have recently, during times of revival, been obliged to for-

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 9, 11, 12.

sake houses of worship provided with baptisteries, and repair to the adjacent rivers. Into Jordan John went with his candidates, and there immersed them "in water." No, says the pædobaptist; Mark says John baptized "*with* water." (Mark v. 8.) But Mark does *not* say any such thing; King James's translators make the evangelist appear to say so. Mark says, *en Iqdan*, which Dr. Campbell, Mr. Hervey, and many other pædobaptist writers, admit can only mean *in water*: but what is more decisive still is the fact,* that, *in the first four English versions*, these words are rendered properly "*in* water." Its being altered to "*with* water" in the last translation, induces, to say the least, a suspicion that the translators of James consulted, in this instance, the custom of their church, instead of the meaning of the Greek; a plan which has recently found much favor among pædobaptists on both sides of the Atlantic.

The last time the fact of John's baptizing is referred to in the sacred history, it is to be found associated with the phrase "much water." "And John also was baptizing in Enon,† near to Salim, because there was much water there."

* Booth's Pædobaptism Examined, vol. i. p. 103.

† *Enon*, literally *Dove's eye*.—Much has been said respecting the nature of this large fountain. I extract for the curious reader some of the most interesting of Mr. Robinson's suggestions.

"Enon was either a natural spring, an artificial reservoir, or a cavernous temple of the sun prepared by the Canaanites, the ancient idolatrous inhabitants of the land. The eastern versions, that is the Syriac, Ethiopic, Persic, and Arabic, of the Gospel of John, as well as the Hebrew and Chaldee Ain-yon, or Gnainyon, suggest these opinions; and it is difficult to say which is the precise meaning of the evangelist's word Enon. It is not certain whether the plain meaning be, John was baptizing at the *Dove-spring*, near Salim, or John was baptizing at the *Sun-fountain*, near Salim.

"Springs issuing from the fissures of a rock, gurgling through the chinks as waters out of bottles, falling from crag to crag, murmuring from bed to basin and from basin to bed, fretting along the ragged sides of a rocky channel, and echoing through rude and spacious ca-

Calvin considers "that, from these words, it may be inferred that baptism was administered by John and Christ by plunging the whole body under water."* The founder of Presbyterianism is not Presbyterian enough for the necessities of modern times; and professors and divines of the same church are quite sure that their founder is wrong, and that *polla hydata* ought to be rendered "many waters."† Dr. Dod-

verns, would form what the Jews called a *Dove-water*, or, if it flowed from a natural spring, in their figurative style a *Dove's-eye*. It is credible such a clean and plentiful baptismal stream was much to the purpose, and much in the taste of such a man as John.

"Adjacent to some of the fountains of Judea were buildings, reservoirs, and large receptacles of water, cisterns of great size, and baths both simple and medicinal. Of the latter were the hot wells of Tiberias, Gadara, Callirhoe, and other places. Near Ramah there yet remains, of very ancient work, a reservoir a hundred and sixty feet long, and a hundred and forty broad. Such also, of different sizes, and for different purposes, were those at Tabor, Jerusalem, Etham, and the gardens of Solomon. One of the fountains of Judah was called Ain-rogel, the Fuller's eye, because there Fullers cleansed stuffs.

"The learned Mr. Bryant supposes that the word Enon signified 'the fountain of the sun,' and that the ancient Canaanites had given this name to the place before the Hebrews occupied the land, to signify that these celebrated waters were sacred to the sun. It is, however, worthy of observation, that the Hebrews changed the name of many places. Moses gave a special charge to the people, not only to destroy altars, pillars, images, groves, and places where the former inhabitants had practised idolatry, but, he added, 'Destroy the *names* of them out of the place. Be circumspect, make no mention of the *names* of other gods, neither let it be *heard* out of thy mouth.' It is, therefore, very credible that the name of this fountain was changed, and that Ain-yon was, in the dialect of the country in the days of John, the fountain of the dove."—*Robinson's History of Baptism*, pp. 15, 17, 18, 19.

* Dr. Miller (the professor of one virtue—boldness) says, "that John baptized by immersion is *utterly incredible*." And again: "there is not *the smallest probability* that he [John] ever baptized an individual in this manner!"—*Tract on Baptism*, p. 73. What a poor, weak, deluded man Calvin must have been!

† Dr. Miller, p. 73.

dridge, whose learning and candour were equalled only by his piety, translates the words in his paraphrase, "because there was a great quantity of water there," and his note in defence of this translation is highly satisfactory:—"Surely," says the learned Doctor, "nothing can be more evident than that (*polla hydata*) *many waters* signifies *a large quantity of water*, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates, Jer. li. 13 *Septuagint*. To which I suppose there may also be an allusion, Rev. xvii. 1. Compare Ezek. xliii. 2; and Rev. i. 15; xiv. 2; xix. 6; where *the voice of many waters* does plainly signify the roaring of the high sea." The same term is used by Solomon, in describing a "love which *many waters* cannot quench, neither the *floods* drown."—Robinson, with a just satire, remarks on this subject, "How it comes to pass that a mode of speaking which, on every other occasion, signifies *much*, should, in the case of baptism signify *little*, is a question easy to answer"—easy from the well known power of prejudice, and the dire necessities of error.

Every point in the history of John, relating to the ordinance of baptism has been brought under review, except the baptism of our Lord, which will form the subject of the next section. Will the reader pause, and inquire if any thing has appeared as yet, which tends in the slightest degree to encourage either the sprinkling or the baptism of infants?

* Doddridge's Family Expositor. London, 1827, p. 53.

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SECTION II.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST.

This important fact is recorded by all the evangelists.* The most circumstantial account is that of Matthew, which I insert.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 13–17.

It has already been observed, that baptism is associated with the "beginning" of every stage of the development of Christianity. In its earliest dawn we have found John baptizing. Now Jesus himself refuses to enter on his public ministry, till he has sanctioned that ordinance by submitting to it in his own person; by and by we shall find the disciples of Christ, in their very first act of co-operation with their divine Master, baptizing; and, finally, when the commission is given to the apostles no longer to confine their ministrations to Judea, but to regard the world as their field of labor, we shall see that they are peremptorily enjoined to baptize as well as to teach.

By submitting to baptism at the hands of John, our Lord authenticated the divine character of his mission, confirmed

* Matt. iii. 13–17. Mark i. 9–11. Luke iii. 21, 22. John i. 29–34.

and honored the ordinance of baptism as a Christian institute, and prefixed his own example to the command which he evidently gave them clearly afterwards to his disciples, and which, after his resurrection, he confirmed and enlarged.* Although in this instance the ordinance could not be emblematical of the purification from sin of the individual himself, yet it was still a most solemn figure of his death and resurrection, his sufferings and glory, by virtue of which all purification from sin, and all the glories of the resurrection, were to accrue to his disciples.

The effect of Christ submitting to the baptism of John, in identifying that ordinance with the Christian dispensation, has already been sufficiently discussed; and it remains only to consider this act of condescension on the part of our Saviour as an example to his disciples in all ages. This view of the subject is powerful on the mind of the Christian, and apt to lead converts into some stream, from the desire they feel to follow that example in all points in which it behoves them. This circumstance has induced many pædobaptist ministers to throw a doubt, and others even actually to deny, that on this point our Lord was an "example to us." The pious Mr. Scott, after urging the solemn importance of following the example of Christ "without exception," seems to fear the

* The reasons suggested by the celebrated Witsius, as given by Mr. Booth, are well worthy of a serious perusal.

WITSIUS:—"Our Lord would be baptized, that he might conciliate authority to the baptism of John—that by his own example he might commend and sanctify our baptism—that men might not be loath to come to *the baptism of the* LORD, seeing the Lord was not backward to come to the baptism of a *servant*—that, by his baptism, he might represent the future condition both of himself and his followers, first *humble* then *glorious;* now mean and low, then glorious and exalted; *that* represented by IMMERSION, *this* by EMERSION—and, finally, to declare by his voluntary submission to baptism, that he would not delay the delivering up of himself to be immersed in the torrents of hell, yet with a certain faith and hope of emerging."—*Miscel. Sac.* T. II. Exer. xv. § 63.

consequences, and to dilute the force of his previous remarks by the ill-placed observation, that "we are not bound to do exactly as he did." The trouble the good man is in, between his desire to honor the Lord he loves, and to save infant sprinkling to which he had the attachment of religious habit, is very apparent in the close of the passage.*

Dr. Adam Clarke, with his usual vigor of fancy, while in one line he admits that this baptism was "the initiating ordinance of the *Christian* dispensation," in the next affirms it to be a compliance with a supposed law respecting washing the Jewish high priest!† The doctor surely forgot that Christ

* "John, being aware of his divine dignity and excellence by immediate revelation, hesitated to comply with this proposal, declaring that he needed to be baptized of Christ with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and to be purged by him from his sins; and he could not but be surprised that Jesus should come for this purpose to him, who was his servant, and a poor sinful man. But Jesus, allowing the truth of his words, intimated that it was proper that he should permit it to be so; 'for,' says he, 'it becomes *us* to fulfil all righteousness.' We never find that Jesus spake of himself in the plural number; and it must therefore be allowed that he meant John also, and all the servants of God, in a subordinate sense. It became Christ, as our surety and our example, perfectly to 'fulfil all righteousness:' and it becomes us to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of God without exception, and to attend on every divine institution according to the meaning and intent of it, as long as it continues in force. Thus far Christ's example is obligatory; but, as John's baptism, not being exactly the same as Christian baptism, is no longer in force, the example only proves that Christian baptism should be honored and attended on. Controverted points, however, cannot thus be settled. Christ's example does not bind us to do exactly as he did, for he was circumcised, kept the passover, and observed the seventh day sabbath, according to the dispensation under which he lived; but we are not required to do these things."—*Scott's Com.* vol. iii. p. 13.

† "There was a kind of baptism among the Jews, viz. that of the priests at their consecration, Lev. viii. 6. Now, as Christ had submitted to *circumcision*, the initiating ordinance of the Mosaic dispensation, it was necessary he should submit to the initiating ordinance of the Christian dispensation, instituted by the same authority. But it was necessary on another account. Our Lord represented the High Priest,

was *not* a High Priest after the order of Aaron, but "after the order of Melchizedec." (Heb. vi. 20.) As a Jew, it would have been criminal, instead of praiseworthy, for our Lord to have appropriated to himself any of the ceremonies belonging solely to the tribe of Levi; and no one has pretended to affirm any thing respecting the washing of Melchizedec. Indeed, not being of the tribe of Levi, it would have been a direct violation of the ceremonial law for Christ to have partaken of any of the ceremonies peculiar to the Levities.

These and similar attempts to divert the baptism of Christ from the great object "of setting us an example that we should follow his steps," serve only, as error ever does, as the dark ground of the painting, to throw out the beauty of truth with the greater effect. When it is remembered that divine authority has affirmed that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," we need no longer search amidst Jewish rites, for a reason why our benevolent Redeemer should add the powerful influence of his own example to an ordinance, compliance with which he presented as the first great test of the sincerity, and therefore of the salvation-state of the professed believer. While our glorious Lord has condescended to set us so plain an example, we apprehend the conscience of every believer who thinks on this subject at all, will never be perfectly at ease till he does "exactly as he did;" and pays a solemn voluntary regard to the ordinance of baptism.

It is lamentable indeed to hear christian ministers telling their hearers *not* "to follow Christ in baptism." Error

and was to be the High Priest over the house of God; now, as the High Priest was initiated into his office by *washing* and *anointing*, so must Christ be; hence He was baptized, and anointed by the Holy Ghost. Thus he fulfilled the righteous ordinance of his initiation into the office of High Priest, and was prepared to make an atonement for the sins of mankind."—*Dr. Clarke's Comment.* Matt. iii.

grows more bold as it tends to its doom. Good men spoke not thus in former days. Hear the founder of the Presbyterian church, John Calvin:—"For this reason he dedicated and sanctified baptism in his own body, *that he might have it in common with us*, as a most firm bond of the union and society which he has condescended to form with us."*

That the baptism of Christ was by immersion has been, till of late, universally admitted. Like others, indeed, whom John baptized, our Lord was baptized "in Jordan;" but it is also added that "Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Few persons will be found who can be induced to go into a river for the purpose of being sprinkled; but, most will agree with Dr. Macknight, that Jesus "submitted to be baptized, that is buried under water, by John, and to be raised out of it again, as an emblem of his future death and resurrection."† May all who have hitherto neglected or hesitated to follow their Lord, not only say with Mr. Polhill, "the pattern of Christ and the apostles is more to me than all the human wisdom in the world," but act upon this principle: and, though the Spirit may not be seen to light upon them, nor the voice be heard that then God is "well pleased" (for these were honors appropriated to our great exemplar), yet shall the "answer of a good conscience" towards God, and the inward witness of the Holy Spirit, lead them to rejoice that they have known "the way of God more perfectly."

* Institutes, vol. iii. p. 425.

† Macknight on the Epistles, London edit. 1829, vol. i. p. 262.

SECTION III.

BAPTISM BY CHRIST'S DISCIPLES.

THE church of God is indebted to the "beloved" John for considerable accessions to the gospel history; and, among them, for that interesting link in the chain of the history of baptism which is the subject of the present section.

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.* And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.—When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee." John iii. 22, 26; iv. 1–3.

In the first of these verses it is stated that "he tarried with

* It is this phrase that appears to have suggested the idea to the mind of the learned President of Illinois College, that, in New Testament usage, the term *baptize* is to be considered as identical with *purify*; and to be regarded solely in its technical import, as relating to an ordinance of purification, without any designation as to its mode of administration. Upon this view of the subject, there is no *command* that water should be used in Christian baptism; which will hardly be deemed a safe position. If it be urged that the use of water is sufficiently established by example and circumstances, without the term *baptize* requiring it, I would observe that, whatever evidence assures us of the application of water at all, assures us equally of its administration by immersion. It may be added, that this idea is incompatible with the commission, "Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name," &c.—"*purifying* them in the name," surely will not do. It is equally opposed, also, to the passages which refer to our being "buried with Christ in baptism"—"*purified* into his death!" Dr. Beecher admitted to the writer, that, in refusing a reference to immersion as connected with these passages, he is contradicted by all antiquity, and by most modern authors.

them and baptized." Now, although we fully admit the subsequent explanation, "that Jesus baptized not, but his disciples," it is evident that his disciples baptized from no fancy of their own, and from no desire to imitate John, but under the immediate sanction of Christ himself. This, therefore, was undeniably Christian baptism. And it was clearly the same, with respect both to its mode and the character of its subjects, as that of John; otherwise they could never have been united in the clause, "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." The identity of the baptism of Christ with that of John is here complete. Jesus, like John, "made and baptized" his disciples; he did not make them disciples by baptizing them.

This link in the history, small as it may appear, is of great moment; not only as it shows the intimate union of the baptism of John with Christian baptism, but as this fact entirely overthrows the position often taken by pædobaptists, that there was no need for Christ to direct the apostles to baptize infants, because, as Jews, they had always been accustomed to consider infants a part of the church. Now, *whom had the apostles been accustomed to baptize during our Lord's personal ministry?* Disciples, as John had done. None can pretend that there is any more symptom of baptizing infants, or of sprinkling, in the verses before us describing Christ's baptizing (by his disciples) than there had previously been in the baptism of John. It remains to be seen, so far as the testimony of the evangelists is concerned, whether this exclusion of infants is continued in the last great commission, or whether any exception is at length remembered in their favor.

SECTION IV.

CHRIST'S LAST COMMISSION TO HIS DISCIPLES.

PREVIOUS investigation has led inevitably to the conclusion, that it was the practice of John to baptize only those whom he had taught the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ. The historian John has testified with equal clearness, that the same course was pursued by Christ and his disciples. The only remaining evidence to be produced respects the commission which Christ gave to his disciples after his resurrection. This command has been recorded by Matthew and Mark, with a perspicuity equal to its brevity.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 15, 16.

The passage in Matthew contains the direction that the apostolic labors are to extend to all nations, whom they are first to *teach*—then to baptize, with the form prescribed; and after that to continue to instruct the baptized converts in all the details of Christian doctrine and duty. The observance of this order in every point is doubtless important, or otherwise, on an occasion so solemn as that on which the Son of God was about immediately to return to the right hand of his Father, it would not have been insisted on. An attempt has been made to obscure the first clause of the commission by rendering it "disciple *by* baptizing;" but

* The term made use of in the commission, *matheteusate*, is found also in Matt. xxii. 52: "Every scribe *instructed* into the kingdom of

is it possible to disciple an adult (in any sense in which a Christian can regard the term) by baptizing him against or without his consent? And, if baptizing an adult in this manner will not "disciple" him, how can an infant be discipled by a process that leaves an adult unaffected? But the futility of this attempt is rendered evident by referring to the language of Mark; there is the mission—preaching—believing—baptism—salvation. "He that believeth and is baptized:" can language be more explicit? Well may the excellent Baxter observe:—

"As for those that say they are disciples by baptizing, and not before baptizing, they speak not the sense of the text; not that which is true or rational—else why should one be baptized more than another? This is not like some occasional historical mention of baptism; but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several works in their several places and order. Their *first* task is, by teaching, to make disciples, which are by Mark called believers. The *second* work is to baptize them, whereto is annexed the promise of their salvation. The *third* work is, to teach them all other things which are afterwards to be learned in the school of Christ. To contemn this order is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, that it is one kind of faith, *even saving*, that MUST GO BEFORE

heaven;" Matt. xxvii. 57, where Joseph of Arimathea is called "Jesus' *disciple*;" and Acts xiv. 21, "And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had *taught* many." These are all the instances in which the verb *matheteuo* is found in the New Testament. Is there any excuse, then, for imputing to it the meaning of an outward act of discipling? Does it not in each case indicate the accomplishment of a mental process—instruction? Those who pervert this direction of our Lord involve themselves in a deep responsibility; they would do well to peruse attentively the teachings of Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians (ch. iii. ver. 11–18), as applicable to their case.

BAPTISM; and the profession whereof the minister must expect."*

No Baptist could have expressed himself more decidedly than Mr. Baxter has done; it is surprising how, with such views, he could still continue the practice of infant sprinkling. Calvin, though not so decided in his expressions, seems to be troubled with doubts, in consequence of the language used in the commission. He observes, in his commentary on this passage:—"Because Christ requires nothing before baptizing, and will have all nations admitted to baptism, baptism *does not seem* rightly administered except faith precede."

Can any candid mind feel otherwise, than that the commission of Christ to his disciples is in exact conformity to his own precept, and that of John: with the exception that both the preceding and the administration of baptism were now, though as inseparably united as heretofore, to take a wider range, through all nations, instead of being confined to the land of Judea? Who can draw any other conclusion, after the investigation of every passage relating to the subject of baptism to be found in the writings of the four evangelists, than that in the second the less authentic one of a direction to baptize or sprinkle infants exists, but that the practice of John, the example of Christ, the practice of his disciples, and the very terms of his great commission, all are utterly opposed to any thing but immersion as the mode,† and believers as the subjects of Christian baptism?

* Disput. of Right to Sacr. pp. 91, 149, 150.

† I am aware that, strictly speaking, immersion is simply baptism—not a *mode* of baptism; but convenience and established custom sometimes seem to require a use of terms etymologically incorrect.

CHAPTER III.

TESTIMONY FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE potency of example in the elucidation and inculcation of doctrines and precepts, is admitted by all writers, both sacred and profane. Hence the deeds of illustrious sovereigns were recorded in the royal histories of the ancient despotisms of Babylon and Persia; hence the esteem in which the lives of ancient heroes, statesmen, and philosophers were held; hence the value of the biographies of the worthies who, in every age of the church, have not counted their lives dear that they might win souls to Christ; and hence, in accordance with this universal law of our nature, the Spirit of wisdom has directed the holy penmen to fill many a page with a record of the obedience of a host of the faithful, among whom Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, John, and Paul, shine as stars in the firmament.

The manner in which the apostles conducted the administration of the gospel system, both as to the indoctrination of its peculiar theology, and the practice of its peculiar institutions, is admitted by all to be a divine commentary on the instructions they had received from their Lord and ours. If, therefore, as is strongly maintained by pædobaptist writers, the baptism of infants was not directly charged upon the disciples by the great Legislator of the church, because, from the inclusion of infants in the Jewish theocracy, no specific direction for their admission to the initiatory rite of the Christian church was necessary, we may hope to find that the *practice* of the apostles, either on the one side or the other, will place this matter beyond all reasonable doubt.

Let us then appear, with an impartial mind, on the investigation of the only divine church history which exists, and examine if any portion of the happiness of infants or the spreading of holiness, is found in its sacred pages. Let every passage be searched with that candid severity and candor which the importance of the subject demands.

SECTION I.

THE BAPTISM WHICH FOLLOWED PETER'S SERMON.

"Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."—Acts ii. 37–42.

AFTER the wondrous outpouring of the Spirit, which, among other invaluable blessings, conferred on the apostles the marvellous gift of tongues, had been "noised abroad" in Jerusalem, a multitude, among whom were Jews from every region between the Indus and the Bosphorus, and between the Black Sea and the cataracts of the Nile, being assembled together, they were thrown into a state of utter astonishment by hearing each one of them, the gospel in their own peculiar tongue or dialect. Their attention being thus powerfully and humanely roused, Peter addressed to his hearers,

thus prepared of the Lord, his most powerful discourse. A large proportion of the audience were, at its close, so convinced by the irrefragable arguments, and affected by the simple appeals of the apostle, that they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The apostle assures them, that to "repent and be baptized" was their solemn and immediate duty.

It was not customary for women to bring their babes to such a crowd as this. It is possible, however, that infants in the arms of their fond mothers might have been present: but then, they were clearly neither parties to the inquiry, nor recipients of the instruction given in reply; and the baptism which followed is strictly limited by the sacred historian to those "that gladly received his word." If infants were present, therefore, on this occasion, they were excluded from the ordinance of baptism; and, instead of receiving it with their parents, were handed to some kind friends to hold, while their fathers or mothers descended into the baptismal wave.

It is urged in behalf of infants, that "the promise is to you and your children:" true; but it is added, "as many as the Lord our God shall call." When children hear, understand, love, and obey the "call of the Lord our God," none should hesitate to lead them to follow their Lord.

A vague idea respecting "the promise" referred to by Peter, associating the phrase with the Abrahamic covenant, seems to confuse the minds of some pædobaptist writers; but the promise referred to is evidently that which the apostle had previously announced, in the closing verse of the passage he had quoted from the prophet Joel, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." There is not, therefore, the slightest intimation in this portion of the sacred history that infants were among those baptized.

Relative to the question of immersion, it has been strongly

argued by most of the advocates of probaptism, that it is in the highest degree improbable that three thousand persons were immersed in the limited time which the opportunity allowed. To this objection there are several answers, either of which is perfectly adequate to refute it.

1. It is *not* affirmed that three thousand were baptized on this occasion:—"They that gladly received the word were baptized." Three thousand were added to the church, indeed; but, entirely irrespectively of any bearing on the question before us, I have always considered this number to include some who had been baptized, either by John, or by the disciples of Christ during his lifetime, who availed themselves of the first public appearance of the church in its organized capacity to unite with it.

2. The act of baptism was by no means confined to the apostles themselves, and sometimes not performed by them at all. It is not said they were baptized by the apostles. Peter "commanded" that Cornelius should be baptized; and Paul, who was the instrument of the conversion of thousands, baptized very few. It certainly appears probable, that, to avoid exciting pride and party spirit in the church, the apostles generally delegated baptizing to the ministering brethren by whom they were attended. Who were the ministers employed on this occasion is not ascertained; certainly not how many.

3. It is not a fact, as probaptists (ministers who seldom attend the administration of the ordinance by immersion) suppose, that it occupies any considerably greater portion of time to immerse than to sprinkle. The time required for individuals to take their places, or be brought to their places (as the case may be), and the time required to pronounce the solemn words which constitute an important part of the rite, are the same in both cases: and, when the individual is placed by the side of the minister in the water, it takes no

longer deliberately to immerse him in token of the burial of Christ, and to raise him again in token of his resurrection, than for the pædobaptist to solemnly dip his fingers in the basin, and deliberately to drop the water on the face of the unconscious babe. Unless, therefore, it is supposed that the apostles placed the multitude in rows, and sprinkled them collectively with a besom, no time worth naming could have been saved by substituting sprinkling for immersion. It is not to be believed that our esteemed friends entertain an idea so ridiculous; yet it is the only one in the least degree serviceable to them.

SECTION II.

BAPTISM OF SIMON MAGUS AND OTHERS, AT SAMARIA.

After the death of Stephen, most of the Christians left Jerusalem, except the apostles. Philip, the second of the seven deacons, went to Samaria, and there "preaching Christ" and performing many miracles, "the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which he spake." (Acts viii. 6.) This city was the residence of the celebrated Simon Magus (or the magician), and he also, "believing," was baptized. The apostles at Jerusalem hearing that Samaria had received the word, either at the request of Philip, or of their own accord, sent Peter and John to lay hands on the disciples, that they might receive the Holy Ghost in his miraculous powers. (Acts viii. 17.) This piece of history confirms the view we have just taken, that other ministers than the apostles usually baptized; and this was the more reasonable, because to the apostles alone was delegated the high honor

of conferring miraculous gifts by the laying on of hands. It was the desire of possessing for selfish purposes this apostolic privilege, which tempted Simon Magus to offer Peter money to procure its bestowment, and which indicated clearly that, though his judgment was convinced of the divine origin of christianity, his heart was a stranger to its pure and benevolent spirit. That portion of the history more immediately pertaining to our present investigation is contained in the following verse.

"But, when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Acts viii. 12.

"Both men and women!" Were there no children in Samaria? Were there no infants in the families of the converted? Those who can trace out such probabilities of there being children in the household of an unmarried lady, traveling extensively on account of her business—can they find no probability that there were children in the families of these "men and women" who were baptized in Samaria? O no! Surmise and conjecture are silent here, however reasonably they might be indulged. These families must be rendered childless by the stroke of a blind criticism, since, if infants be admitted to exist, the admission not only affords no presumption in favor of infant baptism, but proves that children were *not* baptized.

This presents a suitable opportunity to observe, that it is by no means incumbent upon the advocate of the immersion of believers as the only Scripture baptism, to prove that infants were not baptized. We might as well be asked to prove that the apostles did not dip the finger in the "cup of blessing," and then put it into the child's mouth (as a large number, possibly a majority, of pedobaptists still do), and call it giving them the Lord's supper. All admit that believers

were immersed, and that immersion was baptism; those who maintain that children also were either immersed or sprinkled, have the solemn responsibility of *proving* that the apostles did so immerse or sprinkle infants; and, failing in this proof, they are convicted of sin in "running" where they are not "sent." Why this clause, "both men and women," but from the foresight and benevolence of the spirit of truth, to make "assurance doubly sure" as to the proper subjects of baptism; and to cut off all excuse for a practice, which is, virtually, an interpolation of a human alteration in those writings, which claim to afford a solid basis of our eternal hopes because they are wholly divine?

SECTION III.

BAPTISM OF THE EUNUCH.

"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and, sitting in his chariot, read Esaias the prophet. Acts viii. 26–28. . . . . Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Acts viii. 35–39.

This transaction suggests several important reflections, both as to the subjects and the mode of the ordinance.

1. We find that preaching Jesus included preaching baptism. Nothing more is said, than that Philip "preached to him Jesus:" and yet, the first stream or pool of water that the eunuch can discern, he is perfectly acquainted with the highest of all purposes for which streams flow or pools accumulate, and exclaims with delight, "See, here is water, what hindereth me to be baptized?" Clearly, the "whole counsel of God" has not been preached, however fervently repentance and faith may have been urged, if the sinner is left uninformed of his immediate duty so soon as he does truly believe; and it is there that the primitive practice of preaching baptism, as constantly and as simply as repentance and faith, was revived amongst all who know the truth. Our brethren are less culpable in their error than ourselves, if we neglect this duty. I know that many will cry out—"sectarian spirit!" All that I have to reply is, Brethren, there are my instructions, here is my model. Both are divine; whether it be better to obey or please God or man, judge ye.

2. The condition of baptism is here exhibited with peculiar force—"If thou believest *with all thy heart*." Probably the case of Simon Magus, which had so recently occurred in the ministrations of Philip, led suggested to him the penetrating form of this expression. The acceptance of a formal faith on the part of the catechumens in the second century tended powerfully, first to the introduction of very young children to the baptismal font where they could say the creed and Lord's prayer, and speedily to receiving a profession of faith in their behalf; and the baptism of infants has led some pedobaptists of the present day to maintain that a nominal faith in Christianity, unattended by change of heart, entitles the heathen to baptism. This, however, the general duty of our brethren would deny equally with the

advocates of believers' baptism. Surely they might discern, that, if a formal belief does not justify baptism in the case of the adult, neither the fictitious faith by declaration of the Greek sponsor, nor the pledge of future faith by the Episcopal sponsor, nor the hope of future faith by the Presbyterian parent,* can form a justifiable ground for the administration of the ordinance, in the very teeth of the scriptural requirement that the individual himself should *previously believe with all his heart.*

3. The mode of the administration of the ordinance is here clearly detailed. "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." It might well be deemed impossible that any statement could be more specific than this. Does any Baptist minister require any other words to describe correctly the administration of the ordinance as practised by him? Suppose I were writing to a friend respecting the baptism of a young man: —"We both walked into the waters of our magnificent lake, and there I baptized him in the name of the triune Jehovah; and, when he came up out of the water, the smile of heaven was depicted on his countenance." I ask, is it possible any human being capable of understanding the English language, can misapprehend in any point the physical act performed? If perfectly intelligible in one case, how can the same language be obscure or doubtful in the other?

It is urged, that this was "in the desert:" but, as already observed, the Hebrews mean by *desert* an uncultivated place. "Some deserts were beautiful, and had good pastures."† I cannot see any propriety in reducing all the beautiful deserts to barren wastes, and their streams to a bowl of water, for the convenience of my pædobaptist friends

* For a particular historical statement of these essentially different kinds of infant baptism, the reader is referred to Chap. X.

† Calmet, art. *Desert.*

Besides, if a few drops of water only were wanted, travelers through the deserts always had a good supply; and surely a few drops might have been spared without waiting till the eunuch should exclaim, "Here is water—what hindereth?" The want of water *had* hindered his baptism, which could not possibly have been the case if "the quantity of water was of no consequence."

But, of all absurdities in defence of error, the assertion that there is the same evidence that both were immersed as that the eunuch was, is the most childish, not to say disgraceful. Who ever affirmed that persons were baptized (immersed) by simply "going down into the water," without any further action? "They went down both into the water, and *he* baptized *him*." Clearly, therefore, but one person was baptized, or immersed, and that person the eunuch. It is certainly necessary (in rivers or pools at least, whether essential to the validity of the ordinance or not) for the administrator as well as the subject to go into the water in order that the latter may be immersed; but who can possibly imagine that it is necessary for two persons to go down into the water in order that the one may sprinkle the other?

The last refuge is, that the Greek prepositions do not necessarily mean *into* and *out of*, but *to* and *from*. It is a hard case if pedobaptists translate the Bible (thirty of them, with a royal pedant, a strenuous wrangler for sprinkling, as their overseer), and then deny the correctness of their own translation, in a point where their translators would gladly have pleased them, if their consciences, already burdened with royal restrictions, could have endured it. All that need be said is, that these prepositions are generally used to mean *into* and *out of*; and that, if that meaning has not been expressed, the Greek language has no prepositions which will express it. Ask the Greek scholar who is an advocate for sprinkling, whether, if he were about to write a sentence

in Greek describing his going into and coming out of the water, he would not use these very terms? But let not the quibbles of small minds throw a stigma on the character of a whole denomination, and on the character of men of noble mould. Dr. Doddridge, with many others, wholly despises such a subterfuge; and hesitates not to avow views of the baptism of the eunuch perfectly concurring with those here advanced. "It would be *very unnatural* to suppose that they went down to the water, merely that Philip might take up a little water in his hand to pour on the eunuch. A person of his dignity had, no doubt, many vessels in his baggage on such a journey through a desert country, a precaution absolutely necessary for travellers in those parts, and never omitted by them;"* from which the candid doctor leaves his readers to infer, that, if sprinkling "would have done as well," the eunuch need not have waited till he could find a place where he could "go down into the water."

SECTION IV.

BAPTISM OF PAUL.

"And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii. 16.

"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Chap. ix. 18.

THE rivers of Damascus have been celebrated, both before and since the days of Naaman, who exhibited his national vanity by instituting an invidious comparison between them and the Jordan. Uniting immediately above the city, and

* Doddridge's Family Expositor. Acts viii.

running through it, they afforded a full supply of water for its public and private baths. Here was the scene of Paul's baptism; and soon may those beauteous streams be again sanctified to the same holy purpose! If on some occasions the stones of the street are ready to cry out, surely Abana and Pharpar will exclaim aloud, should their limpid streams be repudiated for the modern basin! Paul was to be immersed, and to wash away his sins. Will *baptizo* here bear to be rendered "wash?"—"be washed, and wash?" Will it bear Mr. Beecher's new meaning, *purify?*—"Be purified, and wash away thy sins," is as tautological as the former. This passage, with many others, renders it perfectly manifest that *baptizo*, when used alone, does not, in the style of the New Testament writers, convey the idea of purification, but refers to the *physical act* which is the *emblem* of that purification. The meaning of the passage before us evidently is—"Arise, and be immersed, in token of your purification from sin." If the "one invariable meaning" of *baptizo* had been *purify*, Ananias would not have been ignorant of it; and to maintain it in this case, is charging on him a most absurd reduplication of expression.

From this passage it appears, that it is one object of baptism to denote the cleansing of the candidate from *his* sins. The fathers deemed it necessary to wash away the guilt of Adam, which, in their opinion, doomed the innocent babe to perdition; and thus, by doing what is *not* required, took away from the individual, by their traditions, the opportunity of fulfilling what *is* required. In a strictly paedobaptist church, not one has followed the example of Paul, not one has "washed away *his* sins in baptism;" because the *practice* of St. Augustine is followed, while most are ashamed of his *doctrine*—the damnation of unbaptized infants. As well might men pride themselves on deriving their light from the spots on the sun, as follow Augustine instead of Paul.

Actual sin cannot exist without the development of the intellectual powers to an extent adequate to moral responsibility. Would it be honorable to Christianity and its all-wise Founder, to baptize an adult idiot? If not, why is it necessary or admissible to baptize thousands who never have committed a sin, and who never do during their whole lives —for they never arrive at a responsible age? Where no remission of sins is needed, surely the sign of remission is not required.

SECTION V.

BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS.

"Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts x. 46-48.

THE narrative in which this statement occurs is doubtless familiar to our readers. While Peter was preaching the glorious truth, that "whosoever believeth in Jesus shall receive remission of sins," "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." At this the Jews were astonished, not imagining that God would bestow such gifts on the Gentiles. However unwilling they would have been to admit them to the Christian church by baptism, they could not resist the appeal of Peter, when he pleaded that these Romans had "received the Holy Ghost as well as" themselves. Evidence of reception into the divine favor Peter deemed necessary and sufficient to authorize baptism; do we contend for more? Dare we accept less?

The phrase "Can any forbid water" has been *assumed*

to mean, "Can any forbid water"—*to be brought?* How unfortunate that not one manuscript can be discovered in which these words are found! Surely, if Peter did say so, it is very unfortunate that the historian Luke forgot to insert these few last words. Is it desirable to build our faith on clauses which human suggestions add to the divine word? Nothing can be plainer than that this was an appeal to the Jews, who felt inclined to object to the baptism of these Gentile converts.

SECTION VI.

BAPTISM OF HOUSEHOLDS.

It is at once the glory and security of the faith of the Christian, that it rests upon facts, not conjectures; and that these are facts established by evidence utterly undeniable. The incarnation—death—resurrection—ascension—intercession—of Christ, are facts explicitly stated, and adequately proved, to all who admit the inspiration of the Bible—itself a collection of facts resting on evidence so clear, that doubt can only arise from disinclination to submit to its authority. May not the Christian justly expect the same satisfactory feature to be apparent, on the subject of the positive institutions of the gospel economy? If infants are to be baptized, may not the fact of their being baptized be expected to appear on the page of sacred history? And, if in any portions of the sacred record, will it not be found in those which treat of the baptism of households?

In order that the reader may be able to contemplate the whole subject of the baptism of households at one view, I shall deviate from the order of succession, and introduce in

this section those from the Epistles as well as those which occur in the Acts. Strictly speaking, there are but three households stated in apostolic history to have been baptized —those of Lydia, the jailer, and Stephanas. Nothing is directly stated respecting the baptism of the household, either of Cornelius or Crispus. We have already seen in the former case, that it was those only who had "received the Holy Ghost" that the apostle "commanded to be baptized." With respect to Crispus, it is said he "believed with all his house;" and then it is added that many of the Corinthians, "hearing, believed, and were baptized." Doubtless it is just to *infer* that the household of Crispus were baptized, because it is stated that they *believed*: but then the ground from which the baptism of this household is inferred manifestly excludes the possibility of infants being of the number, the only fact affirmed respecting Crispus and "all his house" being that they "believed on the Lord," an act which it is not maintained by modern pædobaptists that infants are capable of.

"And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. . . . And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren they comforted them, and departed." Acts xvi. 13–15, 40.

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas; and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And, when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." Acts xvi. 29–34.

"And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. . . . I beseech you, brethren, ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." 1 Cor. i. 16; xvi. 15.

The candid reader will at once perceive, that in these passages there is no mention made of infants: and hence, therefore, whoever would prove the divine authority of infant baptism from these passages, must fail for want of evidence, as conjecture can never be the proper ground of faith. It is frequently said, "Infant baptism is right, for there *must have been* infants in the households of Lydia and the jailer:" to all which I have only to say, *prove* that there *were*, and it will be unnecessary to maintain that there "must have been:" he who cannot prove the former, will find it a vain endeavor to sustain the latter. Dr. Neander candidly admits, "that the mention made of whole families proves nothing, for it does not follow that there were infants among them."*

It is very remarkable that, to remove all excuse for falling into so lamentable an error on the baptism of households, the sacred writers should in each instance (apparently accidentally, yet doubtless under the direction of divine wisdom) have furnished the most satisfactory proof that there were no infants in the families alluded to.

With respect to Lydia, there is no kind of intimation that she was ever married; and, therefore, it is superfluous to make any observations respecting the improbability of her being accompanied by her infant children, in those extensive travels in which she was now engaged in following her occupation as a seller of purple. The circumstance of the household being called "brethren" in the 40th verse, a term synonymous with believers, is conclusive evidence against the conjectures of the advocates of infant baptism.

In the jailer's case our pædobaptist friends make *four*

* Judd's Reply to Stuart, p. 191.

suppositions, which, all together, will not amount to *a fact*. 1. That the jailer had a wife. 2. That that wife was a "fruitful vine." 3. That the children lived. 4. That they were not yet grown up to years of discretion. Now, if there were nothing in the narrative to contradict any of these conjectures, they would be but conjectures still; and, consequently, utterly inadequate to contribute a shadow of justification for the alteration of the sacred ordinance of baptism. But it is far otherwise. The statement is clear, that, if the jailer had children, they all heard "the word of the Lord," and all "believed in God." Prove to me that a child "believes in God," in the gospel sense of that phrase, and I ask no questions about its age. Gregory, the patriarch of the Greek church in the fourth century, thought children had better wait for baptism till they could say the creed, and make their own profession of faith. Would it not be better for all children to wait till they give good evidence that they love the Saviour?

Of the household of Stephanas two things are observed: first, that they were baptized; secondly, that they "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." Now, it must be admitted, even by the fondest mother, that, whatever delightful little habits a babe may be addicted to, the "ministry of saints" is not one of the number.

To a plain reader of the New Testament, the household baptisms afford no kind of support to the application of the ordinance to infants. Some years since, however, my late esteemed relative, the learned editor of Calmet, and the laborious collector of the Fragments* which constituted the additional volumes, imagined he had made a discovery in Greek criticism which was conclusive in favor of the existence of infants in the households referred to—affirming that *oikia* denotes the servants of the family, but the other term

* Mr. Charles Taylor.

(*oikos*) the children of the family. This idea has been adopted by the late Dr. Rees, and some other divines on this side the Atlantic. It is ingenious, but untenable; the terms being both used of the same households, and having no more difference in them than the terms *brothers* and *brethren*. The household of Stephanas is called *oikos* in 1 Cor. i. 16, and *oikia* in 1 Cor. xvi. 15: and in many other places the words are used promiscuously, so as not to leave the slightest foundation for the distinction to be entertained."

* The Rev. R. B. C. HOWELL, in his very able Sermons on Baptism, preached in Norfolk in 1838, observes:—

"The difference between the families called *oikos* and those called *oikia* is, by the friends of infant baptism, pleaded, upon the allegation that *oikos* literally denotes the dwelling-place of the master or father of the house, and that *oikia* denotes the house, cabin, or kitchen, in which the servants or slaves reside. In their figurative application they contend that the same difference exists; *oikos* signifying the children, and *oikia* the servants. In view of this explanation we remark, that the house of the jailer is called (Acts xvi. 31) *oikos;* in the very next verse (32) it is called *oikia;* and again in the second verse from this (34) *oikos*. In the first instance quoted it appears evidently to refer to the family; 'thou shalt be saved, and thy house' (*oikos*). The second instance refers to the house literally considered, 'they spake the word of the Lord to all that were in the house' (*oikia*). The last instance refers to the house literally considered, 'he led them into his house' (*oikos*). Subject the words to whatever fanciful, literal, or figurative meaning you choose, and, as it began, so it will end in fancy, and cannot therefore affect the point at issue.

"In the case quoted, the truth does, and ever must, stand demonstrated, that the same house is called indifferently both *oikos* and *oikia*. Assume as correct, however, the pedobaptist criticism, and our authorized version, in the place quoted, ought to be so rendered as to have something like the following reading: Paul and Silas went into the jailer's house, and preached the gospel to him and to his infant children; the servants (who it seems lived, not in a cabin or kitchen, but with the master) believed; he did not, however, baptize the believing servants, but proceeded to baptize the jailer's infants—his *oikos*, as separate from his *oikia!* Ridiculous as this must appear to you, my brethren, it is but the beginning of the chaos which this criticism would produce. Fully to explode the sophistry of this conceit of modern

There is one circumstance connected with household baptisms, on which a very erroneous opinion prevails in pædobaptist denominations; I refer to the idea entertained by them that such occurrences are now very rare, if ever known among Baptist churches. If this were true to the extent presumed, it would afford no solid ground of argument, when the different condition of society and the miraculous powers with which the apostles were endowed are considered; but the fact is, that, during seasons of revival especially, the conversion and subsequent baptism of a whole household is by no means an unfrequent occurrence.*

No attempt at impugning the mode of the administration of the ordinance has been made, except in the case of the jailer, which has been a source of much hopeful difficulty

critics, we shall present a few more instances to show that *oikos* and *oikia* have identically the same meaning, and that, as such, they are used convertibly, or, in other words, in the place of one another, freely in the New Testament. The centurion's house, whose faith was so famed, and whose servant the Saviour cured, as by Luke, called (vii. 6) *oikia;* in the same chapter (10) Luke calls the same house *oikos;* and Matthew (viii. 6) calls it *oikia*. The house of Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter the Messiah brought to life, by Luke (viii. 41) is called *oikos;* and in the same chapter (51) he calls the same house *oikia;* Mark (v. 38) calls the same house *oikos*. In the parable concerning the house being attacked by thieves, recorded by Matthew and Luke, Matthew (xxiv. 43) calls it *oikia*, and Luke (xii. 39) calls the same house *oikos*. We forbear to expose the contradictions which, according to pædobaptist critics, the evangelists here fall into, with themselves and with each other. Let it be observed that Luke (x. 5) calls the same house both *oikos* and *oikia;* his words are, 'into whatsoever house (*oikia*) ye enter, say, Peace be to this house (*oikos*).' That is, according to the pædobaptists' fond imagination:—When you enter a man's kitchen, say, Peace be to the house in which the master and his children reside."—*Howell's Sermons on Baptism*, pp. 39, 40.

* It will be a kindness in the editors of pædobaptist periodicals, if they will not fail to extract these accounts as they appear, that the darkness which pervades the minds even of their professors of ecclesiastical history on this subject may be dispelled.

to the apologists for sprinkling. Lydia's being converted on the brink of a river renders her immersion too probable to afford ground for cavil; but that the jailer was immersed in the middle of the night seems incredible to some minds. To those who will remember that, in the warm climates of the east, every public building was well provided with reservoirs of water,* no difficulty will remain.† It is also clear, that, whether the jailer and his household were baptized in the adjacent river Strymon, or (which is more natural to suppose, and which is the opinion of the celebrated Grotius) in the bath connected with the institution over which he presided, they were not baptized in his house:—"he was baptized, and all his, straightway; and, when *he had brought them into his house*, he set meat before them." So far, therefore, from the circumstances narrated rendering immersion improbable, it is the very reverse; for, had the parties been sprinkled, the rite would surely have been performed in the jailer's house, which it was not.

Every word in the sacred writings relating to the baptism of households has now been laid before the reader; and is he not compelled to admit, that, so far from its being certain that any infants were baptized, there is not the slightest probability, yea, not even a bare possibility of it, on account of the acts and feelings in each case attributed to the households baptized being such as it is impossible for an infant to exercise? How weak must that system be, which presents to the public mind the history of the baptism of households, as one of its most powerful arguments in favor of infant baptism!

* To any reader the least acquainted with ancient topography, this statement needs no proof; and he who impugns it may be readily convicted of his ignorance.

† I recollect well that in a small jail in the city of Richmond there was a large tank, so situated as to constitute an excellent baptistery. I offered to immerse any of my presbyterian friends *in the jail*, and *in the middle of the night*.

SECTION VII.

THE DISCIPLES AT EPHESUS.

"And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and, finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Jesus Christ. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And, when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."—ACTS XIX. 1–7.

THIS passage has been much controverted, as to its affirming the fact that these disciples of John were again baptized by the direction of Paul. The solution of this difficulty depends wholly on the question whether the fifth verse is part of Paul's speech, or of Luke's narration. The scope and construction of the passage appear to me somewhat to favor the latter hypothesis; while the fact of this being the only allusion (if it be one) to a case, which, if it existed at all, must probably have occurred in numerous instances, and the relation which the baptism of John manifestly sustains to the Christian dispensation, would lead me to infer that the former was the correct view of the passage. Whatever be the decision of this question, it has no bearing on the subject before us. When these persons were baptized by John, it was by immersion, on profession of repentance and faith in a coming Messiah; and, if they were baptized a second time, they certainly had not then retrograded to a state of infancy, neither had the form of dipping been yet altered to that of sprinkling. It is only, therefore, an instance of the immer-

sion, or re-immersion, of believers. Surely, if it be a fact that Paul deemed it necessary these twelve brethren should be immersed a second time, it would be strange logic thence to argue that it is not necessary to be immersed at all!*

The only divinely authorized church history has now been fully searched, and not a solitary instance of sprinkling infants has been found, either described or referred to. Many pædobaptists are candid enough to admit this. Dr. Doddridge, in his Lectures on Ethics and Divinity, observes:—"Some have apprehended that they have been able to trace such intimations at least of infant baptism, in the earliest ages of the church, as may to a high degree of probability prove it an apostolic, and consequently a divine institution."† Thus eminent pædobaptist clearly, therefore, admits, that the practice is not to be found in the inspired history.

Mr. Baxter‡ is still more express. "I conclude," says that celebrated divine, "that all examples of baptism in Scripture, do mention only the administration of it to professors of saving faith: and the precepts give us no other direction."

Dr. Neander, of Berlin, admits unhesitatingly, that "it cannot possibly be proved that infant baptism was practised in the apostolic age."§

The admissions of other eminent pædobaptists will be found in a subsequent chapter. I close with a respectful appeal to every advocate of infant baptism, in the words of one of the most eminent of their own body, "to name one PRECEPT OR EXAMPLE for baptizing any other" than "professors of saving faith."

* Calvin maintains that these disciples were not re-baptized. "For myself, I grant that the baptism they had received was the true baptism of John, and the very same with the baptism of Christ; *but I deny that they were baptized again.*"—INSTITUTES, vol. ii. p. 433.

† Lect. CCIV. Miscel. Works, p. 403, London edit. 1830.

‡ Right to Sacraments, p. 156. § Judd's Reply to Stuart, p. 194.

CHAPTER IV.

TESTIMONY FROM THE EPISTLES.

THE biography of the evangelists, the history of Luke, and the apostolic epistles, constitute that threefold cord which cannot be broken, which binds our faith to the religion of Jesus. All the great doctrines of the gospel are distinctly discernible in each of these departments of the temple of truth; although in the former they appear as the seed, and in the latter as the full-grown plant. With respect to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, its institution as described by the evangelists—its practice as stated in the Acts—and its proper administration as enforced in the epistles, are all in perfect accordance. It is equally admitted by all, that this threefold testimony affirms beyond all doubt the immersion of believers, as the command of Christ, the practice of the apostles, and the subject of these epistolary exhortations. So much is not pretended by any, respecting either the sprinkling or immersion of infants. Two of the cords have already been found wanting: it remains, however, to search the epistles, to ascertain if, in the numerous doctrinal arguments or practical exhortations, the baptism of infants be not at least once incidentally referred to. The believer in this practice, as a solemn act connected with the salvation of the souls of his children, and required by his church as a most important duty, will reasonably expect to find that its performance has been enforced, and its neglect deprecated, by the inspired watchmen of Zion, especially by him who pathetically declares that "the care of all the churches" came upon him. The pious pædobaptist will be but the

more confirmed in this assurance, when he reflects how very minute are the practical injunctions of the apostles respecting the relative duties of parents and children. Not to detain the inquirer longer from the investigation, I shall, in one view, place every passage in the epistles relating to the subject before him.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom. vi. 3–6.

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Col. ii. 12.

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism." Eph. iv. 5.

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea." 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." Ch. xii. 13.

"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" Ch. xv. 29.

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 27.

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

In these passages is there aught that favors sprinkling? The figurative expression, "baptized unto Moses in the

cloud and in the sea," has already been demonstrated to have no reference to any such process; and the same can be said of the baptism of the Spirit. But while there is not a shadow of an argument *against* immersion, is there no assurance that this was the mode practised by the apostles? Have all the Fathers,* and Tillotson, Secker, Wall, Doddridge, Scott, Wells, Whitby, Towerson, and Macknight, with Tindal, Calvin, Luther, Grotius, and Tholuck, and the whole catalogue of German critics, all pædobaptists, been in error in supposing that the "burying in baptism," spoken of by Paul in his epistles to the Romans and the Colossians, has a distinct reference to the mode of baptism in the apostolic age? Tindal, one of the morning stars of the reformation, and the earliest translator of the Bible, says justly, that the "plungeynge in the water signifieth the death of Christ, and our pulleynge out again his resurrection." Quotations from all the authors named might readily be given; but, as many have already been introduced in Chapter I., Section ix., and as the question of *mode* will again come under consideration in that portion of the work which treats of the history of baptism from the uninspired writings, I shall leave this branch of the argument, for the far more important question of the proper subjects of baptism. Do the passages quoted sustain believers' baptism? *Do they not, by just implication, deny the existence of any other baptism?*

Concerning those Romans whom Paul addresses as bap-

* The author of the Apostolic Constitution says, "baptism was given to represent the death of Christ, the water his burial."—*Const. Apost.* lib. iii. c. 17.

St. Chrysostom proves the resurrection from the apostolic mode of baptism. "Our being baptized and immerged in the water, and our rising again out of it, is a symbol of our descending into hell, or the graye, and of our returning from thence."—*Chrys. Hom.* xi. 1 Cor. p. 689.

tized, he affirms that their "old man is crucified:" that is, that such is their solemn avowal made in baptism. Can this be affirmed respecting baptized infants? The most ancient pedobaptist churches—the Roman and Greek—rather than appear to separate the sign from the thing signified, most strangely dare to affirm that the child has "renounced the world, the devil, and the flesh:" the Episcopal church arranges for some one to undertake a most terrible responsibility, and declares the child shall do so: but other churches, without cover or pretence, affix the sign where they admit there is no possession of the thing signified, and hence are driven to deny or obscure the true import of this holy ordinance.

In writing to the Colossians, Paul connects baptism inseparably with the "faith of the operation of God." In his epistles to the Ephesians, Corinthians, and Galatians, the same association is found. The affirmation in the latter is peculiarly forcible, so as to exclude it entirely that no infants had been baptized in the Galatian churches. Not only is there no positive allusion to the baptism of infants, which is needful to prove the practice, but the Holy Ghost has seen fit, in condescension to the foreseen and unfortunate condition of many of the children of God, to do more than can be justly required of any human teacher: he has directed the mind of Paul to an assertion which clearly *proves* the *negative*—that there could be none in the church he is writing to, who had been baptized in the unconscious state of infancy. The declaration of the apostle is, that as many as had been baptized "had put on (*enedusasthe*) Christ." The force of this term will be apprehended by referring to Romans xiii. 12–14:—"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light—not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof:

and Eph. iv. 24, "Put ye on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." I ask, then, is it not the affirmation of Paul, that "as many" as had been baptized in the congregation he was addressing had professed to be "new creatures in Christ Jesus?" In the verse preceding, he affirms that they were "*all* the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Can any pædobaptist minister address his congregation thus? Can he say, "As many of *us* as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ?" On the contrary, except in a very few instances, the members of pædobaptist churches have never "put on Christ" in baptism. Could we believe what the more corrupt churches tell us, that Christ was put on their members in their infant baptism, it still would not be their act of putting on Christ, which is what Christ requires of every believer. But few who will read this book believe that monstrous and soul-deceiving error of baptismal regeneration. Evangelical pædobaptists do not profess, either that their members have put on Christ, or that Christ has been put on them, in baptism; and, to any mind that can free itself from the shackles of prejudice sufficiently to let common sense have "free course," it will be apparent, that *any person who has not "put on Christ" in baptism has not been baptized at all.* Oh that the scales might fall from every eye, and the lamentable fact that so many sincere Christians remain without Christian baptism, no longer stain the page of ecclesiastical history! If these brethren, beloved in the Lord, were *denied* baptism, how cruel would they deem it! Is the cruelty less because it is inflicted by themselves?

The assertion of the apostle in his epistle to the Ephesian church, that, as there is "one Lord and one faith," so there is "one baptism," bolts the door on error after it has been closed. It is matter of astonishment and devout grief, that,

with the passage quoted in connection with the foregoing, any Christian should still remain in error. If there is "one baptism" which consists in "putting on Christ," then that which claims to be baptism, and yet does not include a putting on Christ, must clearly, if it is baptism at all, be another baptism, essentially different from the former. But, however, in the Jewish ritual there might be "divers baptisms"—divers immersions of pots, beds, men, and women—in the Christian dispensation there is but "one immersion," that of a profession of "repentance towards God, and faith towards Jesus Christ." Let me ask, what is necessary to constitute *oneness*? In one case baptism is requested by the candidate—in the other he neither knows nor cares any thing about it; in the one the subject is active, "going down into the water"—in the other passive, carried to the font; in the one the baptized makes a solemn renunciation of sin and avowal of faith in Christ—in the other he neither avows nor disavows any thing; in the one the candidate comes "up out of the water," and goes "on his way rejoicing"—in the other he is borne away, utterly unconscious of what has been done. Is this identity? Is this "one faith, one baptism?" No. It is clearly two baptisms—one with faith, the other without faith.*

The phrase "baptized for the dead" has been the subject of much controversy among commentators. Dr. Doddridge, the views of whose judgment is ordinarily equal to the extent of his research, prefers "in the room of the dead." Macknight thus paraphrases the passage:—"What shall they do who are immersed in sufferings for testifying the resurrection of the dead, if the dead rise not at all?" He adds

* Let it be remembered, that all our pædobaptist friends admit immersion on profession of faith to be baptism. Can any man, contemplating this point with candor, bring himself to believe that sprinkling or pouring on the one hand, and the same baptism with the former?

in a note, "Baptism being an emblematical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection, not only of Christ, but of all mankind, it was fitly made the rite of initiation into the Christian church; and the person who received it, thereby publicly professing his belief of the resurrection of Christ and of the dead, might with the greatest propriety be said to have been baptized for the dead; that is, for his belief of the resurrection of the dead." Candid, indeed, for a pædobaptist! May we not be allowed to differ from Calvin? Has not the "alteration" of baptism lost the "substance" as well as the form? Are infants baptized for their belief in the resurrection of the dead?

The sentiment of the passages in the epistles relating to baptism is in perfect unison with all that preceded them. Peter reminds the Christians to whom he was writing, that baptism was eminently instrumental in our salvation ("not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer"—*eperotema*, profession—"of a good conscience towards God"), being a lively emblem of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, on which great fact our salvation is entirely dependent. Here most clearly the mode is immersion, and the subject a true believer. Immersion, because the sprinkling a few drops of water could not have effected a literal cleansing of the flesh, as it is here implied that baptism did; immersion, because associated with the deluge; (true it rained, but yet all will admit that the world was immersed beneath the flood that covered the highest hills); immersion, because the emersion or resurrection of Christ is referred to. The subject of baptism is a believer, because it is the testimony of a good conscience—the conscience certainly of the person baptized. Dr. Doddridge observes, in his note on this passage:—"A courageous readiness in the performance of duty, and even in suffering persecution for the sake of truth, was absolutely necessary in order to maintain that

good conscience, to which, in their baptism, they professed so much regard, and to the exercise of which they so solemnly engaged themselves." If pædobaptists desire to have that testimony of a good conscience to which Peter refers, they must, according to the statement of their own eminent divines, make "*in their baptism*" those solemn professions of which he speaks.*

Our examination of the inspired writings, so far as they really refer to the subject of baptism, is now brought to a close. Has either the immersion or sprinkling of babes been *directed*, *recorded*, or *even alluded to?* The Acts are as clear of the fact as the Gospels of the command; and the Epistles are as free from all suspicion of referring to the baptism of infants as a parental duty, as they are from enjoining it upon the babes themselves. Why should our esteemed friends be "wise above what is written?" Is not the grand principle, the foundation of true religion—"the scriptures, and the scriptures *alone*, the religion of protestants"—greatly endamaged by adopting as an institution of the church, a rite which, in the opinion of the most learned and most pious of their own denominations, has neither the command of Christ nor the practice of his apostles to sustain it?† It is not only devoutly to be wished, but reason-

* If the inquirer after truth on the subject of baptism will bear it in mind, he cannot fail, in reading Luther, Calvin, Baxter, Doddridge, Wesley, Clarke, and others, to perceive the *self-contradictions* which abound in their writings, arising from their speaking of two baptisms, essentially different from each other, as though they were one and the same. For an instance see the extracts from Calvin, in chap. v. sect. i.

† "No article of worship, discipline, government, or opinion, which, however well attested as belonging even to the apostolic churches of the first century, is no where alluded to, or enjoined, in the inspired scriptures, can be binding upon the church in after times; for we adhere to the belief, and on this very ground renounce Romanism, that, whatever our Lord intended to be of permanent observance in his

ably to be anticipated, that the mists which have beclouded the minds of thousands will rapidly clear away. That I may leave nothing unattempted which has so happy a tendency, I shall notice in the succeeding chapter some portions of Scripture which have been erroneously presumed to relate to the subject under consideration.

church, he has caused to be included in the canonical writings: for we may religiously believe that all points at once of great moment and of universal application, are so affirmed in scripture as to carry the convictions of every humble and docile mind."—*Ancient Christianity, by Isaac Taylor.*

CHAPTER V.

PASSAGES ERRONEOUSLY REFERRED TO BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

CIRCUMCISION.

THE rite of circumcision has, in fact, never been connected in the Sacred Writings with that of baptism: but the advocates of pædobaptism have *assumed* that baptism came in the place of circumcision, and, by a series of unfounded analogies, have derived the main support of their system from this source. That I may not misrepresent them on this point, Dr. Woods shall speak for himself and his brethren.

"The position which has been maintained by the ablest writers, and which I shall endeavor to defend, is, that *baptism comes in the place of circumcision.* This position is not founded so much on any particular text, as on the general representations of Scripture, and the nature of the case. When God adopted Abraham and his posterity to be his peculiar people, he commanded them to be circumcised: and it appears from the representations of Moses and Paul, that those who received this rite were under special obligations to be holy. Circumcision was, then, a sign put upon Abraham and his seed, showing them to be a *peculiar people,* under peculiar obligations to God, and entitled to peculiar blessings. Just so, baptism is a sign put upon the people of God under the new dispensation, signifying *substantially* the same obligations and blessings as those which were signified by circumcision; the same, I say, *substantially,*

though in some circumstances different. If, then, circumcision was a rite by which persons were admitted into the society of God's people, and set apart for his service, under the former dispensation; and if circumcision is set aside, and baptism is the appointed rite by which persons are admitted into the society of God's people, and consecrated to his service, under the new dispensation; it is evident that baptism has succeeded in the place of circumcision. We cannot but be satisfied with this conclusion, if the sign of one of these rites was, in all important respects, the same as of the other; and particularly, if they were both appointed as a seal of the same general promise of God to his people, and of the same general relation of his people to him.

"Now, if baptism comes in the place of circumcision, and is, in the most important respects, designed for the same purpose, we should think there must be some similarity between them in regard to their application. And what is the natural conclusion respecting the *children* of believers? Plainly this: that, as the children of Abraham, the father of believers, and the children of all proselytes to the true religion, were formerly circumcised, so the children of all believers are now to be baptized. This must be our conclusion, unless the word of God expressly forbids infant baptism, or unless there is something in the nature and design of baptism which makes it manifestly unsuitable to apply it to infant children."

In maintaining this position, Dr. Woods and his compeers have followed the founder of Presbyterianism; or rather have suffered themselves to be enveloped in the mist which the false position he assumed on this point, so contrary to all his theological tenets, compelled him to throw around this subject. "For, as circumcision was a pledge to the Jews," says Calvin, "by which they were assured of their adoption as the people and family of God, and on their parts pro-

fessed their entire subjection to him, and therefore was their first entrance into the church; so now we are initiated into the church of God by baptism, are numbered among his people, and profess to devote ourselves to his service. Hence it is evident beyond all controversy, that baptism has succeeded in the place of circumcision.

"Now, if it be inquired whether baptism may rightly be administered to infants, shall we not pronounce it an excess of folly, and even madness, in any one who resolves to dwell entirely on the element or water and the external observance, and cannot bear to direct his thoughts to the spiritual mystery; a due consideration of which will prove, beyond all doubt, that baptism is justly administered to infants, as that to which they are fully entitled? For the Lord in former ages did not favor them with circumcision, without making them partakers of all those things which were then signified by circumcision. Otherwise he must have deluded his people with mere impostures, if he deceived them by fallacious symbols; which it is dreadful even to hear. For he expressly pronounces that the circumcision of a little infant should serve as a seal for the confirmation of the covenant. But, if the covenant remains firm and unmoved, it belongs to the children of Christians now, as much as it did to the infants of the Jews under the old testament. But, if they are partakers of the thing signified, why shall they be excluded from the sign?"*

So far as Calvin is concerned, he answers himself so effectually, that it will be difficult for the reader to believe that the following sentiments could be found within a few pages of those already quoted.

"Baptism is a sign of initiation, by which we are admitted into the society of the church, in order that, being incorporated into Christ, we may be numbered among the children

* Institutes, vol. ii. p. 439.

of God. Now, it has been given to us by God for these ends, which I have shown to be common to all sacraments; first, to promote our faith towards him; secondly, to testify our confession before men. We shall treat of both these ends of its institution in order. To begin with the first. From baptism our faith derives three advantages, which require to be distinctly considered. The first is, that it is proposed to us by the Lord as a symbol and token of our purification; or (to express my meaning more fully) it resembles a legal instrument properly attested, by which he assures us that all our sins are cancelled, effaced, and obliterated, so that they will never appear in his sight, or come into his remembrance, or be imputed to us. For he commands all who believe, to be baptized for the remission of their sins. Therefore those who have imagined that baptism is nothing more than a mark or sign by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers wear the insignia of their sovereign as a mark of their profession, have not considered that which was the principal thing in baptism; which is, that we ought to receive it with this promise, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' The last advantage which our faith receives from baptism, is the certain testimony it affords us, that we are not only engrafted into the life and death of Christ, but are so united to him as to be partakers of all his benefits. For this reason he dedicated and sanctified baptism in his own body, that he might have it in common with us, as a most firm bond of the union and society which he has condescended to form with us, so that Paul proves from it that we are the children of God, because we have put on Christ in baptism."*

Is an infant then so "engrafted into the life and death of Christ," and "so united to him as to be partaker of his benefits?" Calvin believed that all who were "so united"

* Institutes, vol. ii. p. 422, 3, 5.

were ultimately saved. did he imagine that all baptized in infancy were ultimately saved?

As the argument derived from the Abrahamic covenant is the main pillar of infant baptism, it is desirable that the reader should have the covenant plainly before him.

"In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." Gen. xv. 18–21.

"And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." Gen. xvii. 1–11.

It will be observed, that, when this covenant was first announced, its terms solely related to the grant and definition of the boundaries of the land of Canaan, to the descendants of Abraham by his promised son Isaac. The only difference existing between this first annunciation and the terms in which, in the second instance, the same covenant is expressed (when the seal of circumcision was instituted), is, that, in

the latter case, they are more full of assurance of the divine favor and blessing. That it was a part of this covenant, though very indirectly expressed, that Christ should descend from Abraham, I willingly admit; as also that the ultimate conversion of the Jews is indirectly included—although the apostle Paul seems to intimate that this may be regarded as the result of a "new" rather than of the old covenant. (Heb. viii. 7–13.) But, whatever may be the extent of the blessing incidentally included, or typically shadowed forth, the direct object of the covenant is the conveyance to the descendants of Abraham of the land of Canaan "for an everlasting possession," and the institution of the rite of circumcision as a sign of acquiescence in that covenant on the part of the Israelites.

The position I maintain is, that the *Abrahamic covenant has never been abrogated;* and that, in fact, the seal of that covenant has been punctually fulfilled on the part of the Jews to the present day: that, consequently, under that covenant their title to the land is still valid, and that the time is rapidly hastening when their actual re-occupancy of it will terminate this dispute.

I am aware that those who have never investigated the subject of the restoration of the Jews will hesitate to admit the force of this argument; but surely all those pædobaptists who believe in that restoration must believe it to be in virtue of the original covenant, respecting which Paul says, "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. xi. 29.) These brethren (and they are many and increasing) ought at once to agree with me, *that, as neither the covenant nor circumcision, its seal, have gone out, therefore baptism has* NOT *come in in the place of circumcision.*

If any should urge that the epistle to the Hebrews affirms that the Mosaic economy has vanished away, I admit it; but the Mosaic is not the Abrahamic. Although the latter

was incorporated with the former for a season, it never partook of its temporary character; and, when sacrifices perished with the temple, circumcision has continued to exist. If it be still urged that Paul was justly vehement against the circumcising of the Gentiles, as bringing them under obligation to "keep the whole law," it is replied, that it was as an initiation into the Mosaic covenant, and not as the seal of the Abrahamic, that it was required of the Gentiles by the judaizing teachers. It is also to be observed, that, while, as the apostle of the Gentiles, Paul repelled with indignation the attempt of the Jewish party on the liberty of the Christian church, he never gave the least intimation that the Jews should desist from circumcising their children. Paul was, indeed, accused by his enemies of teaching that the Jews were to "forsake Moses," and that they ought not to circumcise their children: but the brethren at Jerusalem suggested the propriety of his taking an opportunity to conform himself to one of the Mosaic customs, that "all might know that the things whereof they were informed of him were nothing." It is evident, therefore, that the apostles did *not* teach the Jews to abandon circumcision; and that, as the Jew still held to circumcision, and the Gentile had never adopted it, baptism could not in either case have "come in place of circumcision."

The restoration of the Jews, which the apostle affirms will be "as life from the dead," will probably be the main instrumentality for healing the divisions of the church, as well as for successfully disseminating the gospel among the heathen; and the first great work of healing will be the removal of this widely diffused error from the minds of Christians. When the covenant with Abraham, of which God has never "repented," receives its grand fulfilment, pedobaptist divines will feel ashamed of their following in the footsteps of their illustrious predecessors of Rome, in

intermingling Judaic peculiarities (into which they had no right to intrude) with the strictly spiritual dispensation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This position of the advocates of infant baptism, that the children of believers have a right to baptism on the ground of their interest with their parents in the "covenant of grace, the covenant of redemption," is untenable for other reasons. They maintain this, indeed, not of *all* infants, but of "those only whose parents, or one of whose parents, we should be authorized to baptize, in case baptism had not been before administered."* In other chapters of this work it will be shown that such infant baptism as this is a *very late innovation*, totally opposed to the much more benevolent pædobaptism of the Fathers, and that this departure from the order of God's house has an injurious effect on the *faith* of the household: here it is only necessary to point out, that the assumption that the covenant of grace and the covenant of Abraham are identical is utterly fallacious. Yet this is one of the main pillars of this temple of error. Dr. Burder says, "Infants are to be baptized solely on the ground of connexion with their parents."† And this connexion he affirms to be of a spiritual nature: "It is a connexion in the covenant of grace, the covenant of redemption, the everlasting covenant, embracing all that man can desire, and all that Jehovah can impart."‡ In this matter the premises are false, and of course the conclusion fails. The covenant of Abraham is *not* the covenant of grace, for the following reasons:—

1. The covenant of grace was made with Christ before the foundation of the world: the covenant of Abraham two thousand years afterwards.

2. The covenant of grace, from the beginning of the

* The Right of Infants to Baptism, by H. F. Burder, D. D. London, 1822, p. 36.

† Ibid. p. 7. ‡ Ibid.

world, till the time comes "that the saints possess the kingdom," is *purely* spiritual: that of Abraham was in its first formation *purely* temporal, and in its enlarged renewal spiritual blessings are only incidentally unfolded.

3. There are but two spiritual covenants in which man's immortal interests are concerned—that of *works* and that of *grace*. Of the last the blood of Christ is sealed. "This cup is the new *covenant* in my blood." (1 Cor. xi. 25.) Out of this covenant none can be saved. If the covenant of grace was commenced with Abraham, all the inhabitants of the world for two thousand years are consigned to an infinite perdition.

4. For four thousand years the partakers of the blessings of this covenant were neither required nor authorized to form themselves into any distinct body. Dr. Woods lays great stress on the idea that the Israelites were required to be "holy:" but does he believe that *personal holiness* was the ground of the separation of the descendants of Abraham from the other nations? On the contrary, were not the Sadducees, who even disbelieved in a future state (a belief in which is certainly never *required* by the law of Moses), equally members of the Jewish hierarchy with the Pharisees, and even with devout believers? They were a *nation* "holy (that is, *separated*) unto the Lord," from all other nations: but there was never any *separation* of those who hated sin, and were looking for the Messiah as a spiritual deliverer, till the days of John the Baptist. Then, *and not till then*, the partakers of the covenant of grace were directed to come out from the unbelieving world, both Jewish and Gentile, and were ultimately formed, under the authority of Christ and his apostles, into a distinct spiritual organization. The covenant with Abraham made no alteration with respect to piety being a ground of visible distinction; this matter remained as it had been in the times of the patriarchs, or

even, so far as we have any information, in the antediluvian age. First, for four thousand years the people of God are left hid in the world; then they are organized into a spiritual body, which, for nearly two thousand years, has been persecuted either by pagan, papist, or protestant.* Yet one more change awaits those who have a part and lot in this "everlasting covenant;" that which will unite temporal power with spiritual organization, when "the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

One source of misapprehension respecting the covenant of Abraham, is mistaking its typical and emblematical application for one of a literal character. "Thy seed," says the apostle, "that is (typically) Christ." As the covenant of Abraham secured to him a numerous natural posterity on account of his obedience, so the covenant of grace, made between the Father and the Son, secured to the latter a numerous spiritual seed:—"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Again—as the covenant with Abraham secured the title to Canaan to his posterity, so does the covenant of grace in Christ secure to believers in him their title to the heavenly Canaan.

In order to prevent the misapplication of any of his reasonings respecting the transactions between God and Abraham, the apostle Paul is especially careful to extend the analogy to none but to those who are personally possessed of Abraham's faith.

"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now, to him that worketh is the

* Without referring to the New England persecution of John Rogers, shall I be deemed uncharitable if I say, that, as pædobaptism began its official career under Augustine by "cursing," so it seems determined to finish it with persecution, as the imprisonment of the devoted Oncken by the protestant pædobaptist senate of Hamburgh, and the Mœnsters by the protestant courts of Denmark, testify?

reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. . . . . Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of *all them that believe*, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also *walk in the steps of that faith* of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. . . . . Therefore it is *of faith*, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is *of the faith* of Abraham, who is the father of us all. . . . Now, it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, *if we believe on him* that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Rom. iv. 3–25.

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then, *they which be of faith* are blessed with faithful Abraham. . . . That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit *through faith*. . . . Now, to Abraham, and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. . . . For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And *if ye be Christ's*, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. iii. 8–29.

It is suggested that those who have been accustomed to derive their authority for infant baptism from the Abrahamic covenant, whether, in these passages, there is the least appearance of any of the uncircumcised being regarded by the apostles as sustaining any relation to Abraham, *except they actually possess the faith which Abraham exercised?* "If we believe in Christ" is the constant tenor of the apostle's argument, as the condition of being included in the

blessedness which Abraham possessed. But it is alleged, that, as circumcision, which was the "sign" and "seal of the righteousness of faith which he had being yet uncircumcised," was given to the natural children of Abraham, so baptism, the sign of the believer's faith, should be given to his natural children. This misapplication of the apostle's argument arises from a great misapprehension, in extending circumcision as a "sign of faith" to the descendants of Abraham, instead of limiting it *to this particular* to Abraham himself. Let it be observed, that this seal of the covenant was given to all Abraham's servants, as well as his children. Were all who were bought with Abraham's money possessed of Abraham's faith? The wild youth Ishmael (who was soon after cast forth for mocking the son of promise), had he his father's faith? Circumcision was a sign of *faith* to Abraham, but not to his posterity. On his part it was a voluntary act—in the case of others it was involuntary, or compulsory. It was to them all a sign (a very plain one too) of Abraham's faith; and it was administered to them all, from eight days old and upwards, whether they had faith or not. When parents are converted, are their grown up children and the servants of the family to be baptized? *There is the same authority for baptizing all these, as for baptizing babes on the ground of circumcision.* When pædobaptists venture to carry out their own principles, further argument may be necessary; till then, upon the principles of logical induction, circumcision avails them nothing, because it proves *too much*. "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." What Baptist denies to those who give evidence that they are Christ's, the gospel sign that they possess a faith like that of the father of the faithful?

There is yet one more aspect in which circumcision is placed before us as a point of controversy in the early church,

which is utterly fatal to the idea that baptism has "come in its stead."

"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. And, when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe, that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they. . . . Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; but that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." Acts xv. 5-20.

Now it must be apparent to any mind not wholly blinded by prejudice, that, if the apostles had taught that baptism came in the place of circumcision, this case could never have come before them and the brethren as a matter of dispute. Or, even if this had been possible—had the Gentiles, children and all, received baptism *instead of circumcision*—I appeal to any one in his sound mind, whether it would have been possible, this question having arisen, for the apostles to have done otherwise than have stated to the discontented Jews, that these Gentile converts were to be regarded as having received the sign of the Abrahamic covenant when they were baptized, and that *therefore*, it would be unnecessary for them to be circumcised. The same may be said respecting the expression of the apostle, "the father of all that *believe*, though *not circumcised*." Had baptism come in the place of circumcision, the apostle would have said, "though baptized instead of being circumcised."

The case of Peter, who was at length over-persuaded by the judaising party so that he would not eat with the uncircumcised, is directly in point. In what an odious light does the idea that he had taught that baptism came in place of circumcision place his conduct! He first (according to the doctrine of pædobaptists) gives believers and their children the seal of the covenant of Abraham—the gospel seal, baptism, *instead* of circumcision, and then refuses to eat with them because they are not circumcised! Such is the lamentable folly in which those suffer themselves to be implicated, who follow in the mystifying track of Cyprian and Augustine. How long will Christians, under the spell of ecclesiastical authority and influence,* permit their rational powers to be thus imposed upon? The piety and sincerity of many of the advocates of these perversions I do not doubt; but I remember that piety and sincerity have been allied with the impostures of Rome herself.

The question of the covenant of circumcision must not be dismissed, before the attention of the reader has been called to the suicidal contradictoriness of pædobaptist authors on this subject: one class maintaining that children are to be baptized in order to be *brought into the covenant of grace* (this was the ground on which the fathers insisted on *all* infants being baptized); the other, that, as children of believers, *they are already in the covenant of grace*, and therefore are entitled to the supposed seal, baptism. Indeed, it is not only the case that different pædobaptist authors thus contradict and confute each other; but it is not unfrequent

* The author once addressed the question to a truly pious lady attending his ministry, who had been firmly educated in the Presbyterian faith: "Do you find any trace of infant baptism in the New Testament?" Her sincere and simple-hearted reply was—"No sir, I believe not—but then *it is so plain in the catechism!*" Human tradition and formulæ are the real foundations of infant baptism.

for the same author to be, on this point, inconsistent with himself.

Mr. Booth, in his pungent and unanswerable work, has given a remarkable instance of this from the celebrated Matthew Henry's Treatise on Baptism. "In one place he says, 'The gospel contains not only a doctrine, but a covenant; and *by baptism* we are BROUGHT INTO that covenant.' In other places he insists, that 'baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, and therefore belongs to those who ARE in that covenant (at least by profession), and to NONE OTHER. The infants of believing parents ARE in covenant with God, and *therefore* have a right to the initiating seal of that covenant. When I say they are in covenant with God, understand me of the external administration of the covenant of grace, not of that which is internal.' The conduct of Mr. Henry is quite similar in regard to church membership. For in one place he tells us, that baptism 'is an ordinance of Christ, *whereby* the person baptized is *solemnly* ADMITTED a member of the visible church:' yet in the same Treatise he assures us, that baptism 'is an ordinance of the visible church, and pertains therefore to those that ARE *visible members* of the church. Their covenant right and their *church membership* entitleth them to baptism: baptism doth not *give* the title, but *recognizes* it, and completes that church membership which before was imperfect.' He acts the same part over again in respect to discipleship, as the reader may plainly perceive by comparing the two following arguments. 'If it be the will and command of the Lord Jesus that all nations should be *discipled* BY BAPTISM, and children, though a part of all nations, are not excepted, then children are to be discipled BY BAPTISM.' 'If the infants of believing parents ARE *disciples*, they are to be baptized: but they ARE *disciples*, and therefore to be baptized.'"*

* Booth's Pæd. Exam. pp. 173, 174.

The reflections of Mr. Booth are just and forcible. "How happily do these expressions—'baptism and the covenant,' 'baptism and disciples,' 'baptism and the members of the visible church,' play into the hands of each other! They are of so pliable a temper, of such admirable force, and of such various application, that by a prudent management of them the same conclusion may be inferred from contrary premises. Are you desirous of proving, for instance, that the infants of believers are *not* in the covenant, are *not* disciples, are *not* members of the visible church; and, therefore, that they ought to be baptized, in order to an interest in those prerogatives and honors? Or, are you inclined to load the Baptists with the opprobrious charge of leaving their infants to the *uncovenanted mercies* of God, and in the *state of heathens?* Do but arrange the forementioned words in a certain manner, and you demonstrate each particular. If, on the contrary, you reverse that order, they will equally prove, with surprising facility and force, that those very infants *are* in the covenant, that they *are* disciples, that they *are* members of the visible church; and therefore should be baptized. So that you see, though the mediums of your arguments be really opposite, yet the conclusion is quite the same, and just such as you desire. That is, the infants of believers should be baptized, because they are *not* in the covenant, and because they *are* in the covenant."*

The inconsistency in which pædobaptists are involved by introducing infants to church membership, affects not only their private writings, but their public formulæ. Almost all the "confessions" and "articles" of the reformed churches so describe the essential features of a gospel church as inevitably to exclude infants. The following extracts will enable the reader to judge for himself.

"CONFESSION OF HELVETIA.—A church; that is, a com-

* Booth's Pæd. Exam. pp. 173, 174.

pany of the faithful, called and gathered out of the world; a communion, I say, of all saints, that is, of them who do truly know and rightly worship and serve the true God in the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour.

"CONFESSION OF BASLE.—We believe a holy Christian church, that is, a communion of saints, a gathering together of the faithful in spirit, which is holy, and the spouse of Christ; wherein all they be citizens which do truly confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, and do show forth that faith by the works of love.

"CONFESSION OF THE FRENCH CHURCHES.—The church is a company of the faithful, which agree together in following the word of God, and in embracing pure religion.

"CONFESSION OF BELGIA.—We believe and confess that there is one catholic or universal church, which is the true congregation or company of all faithful Christians, which do look for their whole salvation from Christ alone.

"CONFESSION OF AUGSBURG.—To speak properly, the church of Christ is a congregation of the members of Christ; that is, of the saints, which do truly believe and rightly obey Christ.

"CONFESSION OF SAXONY.—The visible church in this life, is a company of those which do embrace the gospel of Christ, and use the sacraments aright.

"CONFESSION OF SUEVELAND.—The church or congregation of Christ, is the fellowship and company of those which addict themselves to Christ, and do altogether trust and rest in his protection. These only, if we will speak properly, are called the church of Christ, and the communion of saints.

"CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered

according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."*

The question of the perdition of unbaptized infants, in consequence of their not being in the covenant of grace—and at least *one reformed* pædobaptist church refuses to bury such in consecrated ground!—might here be investigated; but, as the subject will come fully under consideration in the chapter which treats of "the doctrines which preceded and introduced infant baptism," I shall close this section with expressing my concurrence in the sentiment of Dr. Wall—that the view taken of the Abrahamic covenant and circumcision, in support of infant baptism, *is the basis of all the national establishments of Christianity.*

SECTION II.

JEWISH PROSELYTE BAPTISM.

Dr. Wall, liberal on the question of immersion, but devotedly zealous on that of infant baptism, admitting that the Scriptures contain neither precept nor example for this practice, naturally looks everywhere else to find it. It may be presumed, from his placing so much reliance on the traditions of Jewish writers, that he feels those of the Christian fathers insufficient for his purpose. He has much delighted himself, and the advocates of infant baptism generally, by finding out, as he imagines, that all Jewish proselytes were baptized as well as circumcised.

"He that knows nothing of it," we are told, "is an incompetent judge of the force of the sayings of Christ and

* Booth's Pæd. Exam. pp. 175, 176.

the apostles. It was called *baptism of proselytism*, distinct from baptism for uncleanness: it was such, and with just *reason* according to the writer, in the ground on 'Moses's law:' and *was in fact the basis of the law of Christ requiring baptism*. If any proselyte," it is added, "who came over to the Jewish religion, and was baptized into it, had any *infant children* then born to him, they also were, at the father's desire, circumcised and baptized, and admitted as proselytes. It was with such proselytes as it was with Abraham, at his first admission to the covenant of circumcision. As Abraham of ninety-nine years old, and Ishmael his son of thirteen years old, and all the males in his house that were eight days old or upwards, were circumcised at the same time; so such a *proselyte*, with all his, were both baptized (and circumcised, if they were male children), and had each of them a sacrifice (such as was by law required for a Jew's child) made for them: but, if females, they were baptized and a sacrifice was offered for them."*

Supposing the facts to be as Dr. Wall states them (which I shall presently show is not the case), what becomes of the grand argument that baptism came in the place of circumcision, when, according to Dr. Wall, they were co-existent? Another instance in proof that error is suicidal.

The Jewish writers, who mention the baptism of proselytes, admit it to be a tradition of the elders, and our Lord condemned these traditions most unequivocally; it does not form, therefore, if the fact were proved, a very enviable foundation for a Christian ordinance. "The baptism of John," inquired our Lord of the Pharisees, "was it from heaven or of men?" They feared to say it was of men, for the people all believed John to be a prophet. Dr. Wall, and his followers, Dr. Woods and others, it would seem, have less reverence either for the people or for John, than the Phari-

* Introd. to Wall's Hist. of Infant Baptism, 3 vols. 8vo. p. 11.

sees alluded to. When asked the same question as that proposed by our Lord, they do not hesitate to affirm that baptism, so far from being fresh from heaven, was quite an old affair —a custom of the Jews; and then they make the great initiatory institution of the church of Christ rest upon this custom!

The next step in the argument is this—that, since NONE of the children of these Jewish proselytes who were born *after* their parents had been received as members of the Jewish commonwealth were baptized, *therefore* ALL the children born to the members of the church of Christ should be baptized without fail! It would be happy, indeed, if the alleged Jewish proselyte baptism were made the pattern for infant baptism, for then it must of necessity speedily exhaust itself. Some pædobaptist divines, especially Mr. Emlyn, have advocated this view of the subject.

All the Jewish immersions of which we have any account in scripture were performed by the persons themselves; and, if there were any such custom before the time of Christ as that of Jewish proselytes being immersed, they doubtless immersed themselves. Will that practice serve to found Christian baptism upon? What can those say about the immersion of Jewish proselytes as their example, who scarcely wet the babe's forehead with a moistened finger? Their favorite Maimonides states, that the "wise men" required, for the purpose of this ablution, a place "a cubit square, and three cubits in depth, and this measure holds forty seahs of water;" and then adds, that it is not a valid ablution "if a man dips all his body except his little finger!"*

It is unnecessary, however, to dwell on this subject, as there is no satisfactory evidence that any such custom existed among the Jews before the days of John the Baptist, certainly none that it was of divine appointment. Dr. Gill, in

* Maimon. Hilchot. Mikvaot. Chap. iv. Sect. 1.

his acute and learned dissertation on this subject, which, so far as I am aware, was never answered, has satisfactorily shown that, in the Old Testament account of the regulations for the admission of proselytes to Jewish privileges, circumcision is prescribed, but not a word said of baptism.

"The precept respecting a captive heathen female who should become a *proselytess* (Deut. xx. 10–14), is observed to contain particular injunctions as to the shaving of her head and the paring of her nails, but not a word about her being dipped or baptized."

Dr. Gill then notices the remarkable silence of the Apocrypha, the New Testament, and Philo (who lived in the first century), on this subject; although all mention proselytes (Judith xiv. 6; Matt. xxiii. 15; Acts ii. 10, vi. 5, xiii. 43), and dwell sometimes, as in the case of Achior in Judith, on the manner of their being made. Philo lived at Alexandria, where proselytes were more likely to abound than in Judea, and he speaks of their great privileges, but says not one word respecting their baptism.

"Josephus mentions whole nations who became proselytes by circumcision, as the Idumeans and Ituræans; the conversion of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and her sons; and the anxiety of one of them (Izates) to become a perfect Jew. The subject of baptism is not hinted at, however, by the historian in any of these cases.

"None of the Targums, or rabbinical books, written a little before or after the apostolic age, though full of the most minute observances to be enjoined on proselytes, mention proselyte baptism."*

The existence of Jewish proselyte baptism before the times of Christ and his apostles, is admitted by the best German authors on Jewish antiquity to be, not only without proof, but highly improbable.

* Gale's Reflections on Wall's History of Infant Baptism, p. 477.

I shall close this subject with the testimony of the celebrated Dr. Owen, whose high attainments in Hebrew literature, and thorough acquaintance with rabbinical learning and Jewish antiquities, claim for his opinion great weight.

"Learned men teach and confidently affirm, that a proselyte of righteousness was never made, though circumcised, without being baptized. But, that any one should be made a partaker of all the privileges of that church, there was need only of circumcision, as express testimonies of the holy scripture teach; for so the law runs (Exod. xii. 48)—concerning the rabbinical baptism not a tittle. But they think that this proselyte baptism took its rise from another legal appointment. For, before the giving of the law, Jehovah spake to Moses, and said: 'Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes' (Exod. xix. 10). But this was the washing of their clothes. By clothes they say the whole body is understood. Whence does that appear? The rabbins so teach. There is no reason, however, that we should believe them, contrary to express testimonies of scripture. This washing of clothes served that single occasion only, and was a token of reverence for the divine presence in the solemn giving of the law; nor did it pertain to the stated worship of God. So that the necessity of baptizing persons by a stated and solemn rite for ever should arise from a single instance of washing garments, and that depending on a reason which would never more occur, concerning the observation of which no mention is made, nor is any trace found in all the Old Testament, and which is not confirmed by any divine command, appointment, or direction, seems absolutely improbable. The institution of the rite of baptism is nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament. There is no example of it in those ancient records; nor was it ever used in the admission of proselytes while the Jewish church continued. No mention of it

occurs in Philo, in Josephus, in Jesus the son of Sirach, nor in the evangelical history. This ceremonial opinion, therefore, owes its rise to the Talmud, or anti-Mishnical doctors, after the destruction of their city. The opinion of some learned men about the transferring of a Jewish baptismal rite, which, in reality, did not then exist, by the Lord Jesus for the use of his disciples, is devoid of all probability."

Again, in his Preliminary Exercitations on the Epistle to the Hebrews:—"From this latter institution the washing of their clothes at Sinai, which was *temporary* and *occasional* (and of this kind they had many granted to them whilst they were in the wilderness, before the giving of the law), the rabbins have framed a baptism for those that enter into their synagogue; a fancy too *greedily embraced* by some Christian writers, who would have the holy ordinance of the church's baptism to be derived from thence.* But this washing of their clothes, not of their bodies, was temporary, never repeated; neither is there any thing of any such baptism or washing required in any proselytes, either men or women, where the laws of their admission *are strictly set down*; nor are there the least footsteps of any such usage amongst the Jews until after the days of John Baptist, of whom it was first taken up by some anti-Mishnical rabbins."

* I am surprised that Dr. Woods should be content to lie under this just censure of one of the greatest pædobaptist divines that ever lived. See the 50th page of his Lectures.

SECTION III.

CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS "HOLY"—CHILDREN BLESSED BY CHRIST—"SO SHALL HE SPRINKLE MANY NATIONS."

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." 1 Cor. vii. 14.

"THE great question in relation to this passage," says Dr. Miller, "is, in what sense does a believing parent 'sanctify' an unbelieving one, so that their children are 'holy?' It certainly cannot mean, that every pious husband or wife that is allied to an unbelieving partner is instrumental in conferring on that partner true spiritual purity, or, in other words, regeneration and sanctification of heart; nor that every child born of parents of whom one is a believer, is, of course, the subject of gospel holiness, or of internal sanctification. No one who intelligently reads the Bible, or who has eyes to see what daily passes around him, can possibly put such a construction on the passage. Neither can it be understood to mean, as some have strangely imagined, that, where one of the parents is a believer, the children are legitimate; that is, the offspring of parents, one of whom is pious, are no longer bastards, but are to be considered as begotten in lawful wedlock! The word 'holy' is nowhere applied in scripture to legitimacy of birth.

"The terms 'holy' and 'unclean,' as is well known to all attentive readers of scripture, have not only a spiritual, but also an ecclesiastical sense, in the word of God. While in some cases they express that which is internally and spiritually conformed to the divine image, in others they quite as plainly designate something set apart to a holy or sacred use; that is, separated from a common or profane, to a holy

purpose. Thus, under the Old Testament economy, the peculiar people of God are said to be a 'holy people,' and to be 'severed from all other people, that they might be the Lord's;' not because they were all, or even a majority of them, really consecrated in heart to God, but because they were all his professing people—his covenanted people; they all belonged to that external body which he has called out of the world, and established as the depositary of his truth, and the conservator of his glory. In these two senses the terms 'holy' and 'unclean' are used in both testaments, times almost innumerable; and what their meaning is in any particular case must be gathered from the scope of the passage. In the case before us, the latter of these two senses is evidently required by the whole spirit of the apostle's reasoning.

"It appears that, among the Corinthians to whom the apostle wrote, there were many cases of professing Christians being united by the marriage tie with pagans; the former, perhaps, being converted after marriage, or being so unwise as, after conversion, deliberately to form this unequal and unhappy connexion. What was to be deemed of such marriages, seems to have been the grave question submitted to this inspired teacher. He pronounces, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, that, in all such cases, when the unbeliever is willing to live with the believer, they ought to continue to live together; that their connexion is so sanctified by the character of the believing companion, that their children are 'holy,' that is, in covenant with God—members of that church with which the believing parent is, in virtue of his profession, united; in one word, that the infidel party is so far, and in such a sense, consecrated by the believing party, that their children shall be reckoned to belong to the sacred family with which the latter is connected, and *shall be regarded and treated as members of the church of God.*"*

* Dr. Miller on Infant Baptism, pp. 17-20.

Such is the view which Dr. Miller and some others, following the fanciful suggestions of Augustine, take of this passage. Ambrose, who is followed by Camerarius, Vatablus, Camero, Justinianus, Dr. Whitby, Dr. Ames, Dr. Macknight, and others, maintaining the opinion that the allusion is to the legality of the marriage bond, under the circumstances of the case. Dr. Macknight observes:—"Our translators seem here to have understood the terms *sanctified*, *unclean*, and *holy*, in a federal sense, which, indeed, is the common opinion. But, first, it is not true in a federal sense, that the unbelieving party in a marriage is sanctified by the believing party; for, evidently, no one hath a right to the blessings of the gospel covenant by the faith of those to whom they are married. In the second place, it is as little true that the children procreated between believing and unbelieving parents become *unclean* by the separation of the parents, and *clean* by their continuing together, as the apostle asserts, if by *unclean* we understand exclusion from the covenant, and by *clean*, admission into it. For the title which children have to be members of the covenant depends not on their parents living together, but on the faith of the believing parent."*

That this passage has no connexion with any system of baptism ever practised is evident; because, if the terms "holy" and "sanctified" are designed to entitle the parties who are thus designated to the privileges of the Christian church, the unbelieving husband is as much entitled on this ground as the children, and also the grown-up children as much as the babes. There is no distinction made by the apostles: why, then, do those who claim this passage reject unbelieving husbands and youth from baptism, when they are "sanctified by the wife" and mother? The practice of

* Macknight on the Epistles, notes *in loc.*

probability on this point is a sufficient answer to their argument.

Thinking the position of the passage, it is not necessary in a history of baptism to ascertain its true meaning, it having in reality no relation to the subject. It may, however, be a satisfaction to some minds to insert an explanation, the most satisfactory that I have met with. It is from the pen of Dr. John L. Dagg.

"The Jews considered all Gentiles to be unclean, and thought it unlawful for a Jew to be in the house, keep company, or eat with, or touch a Gentile. By some means, possibly from the influence of judaizing teachers, the church at Corinth seems to have been agitated with the question, whether the same rule ought not to be established to regulate the intercourse of the members of the church with other persons; that is, whether the church ought not to decide, that all who were without were unclean to them who were within, just as Gentiles were unclean to Jews; and that, therefore, it was inconsistent with christian purity to dwell, keep company, eat with or touch them. While this question was undergoing discussion in the church, it was perceived that it involved a very important case. Some of their members were married to unbelievers, and, if such a rule should be established, these members would be compelled to separate from their unbelieving husbands or wives. Although the lawfulness of the marriage was not questioned, yet it would be unlawful for a believing husband to dwell with his wife, until God had converted her. The church resolved, probably after much discussion of the question, to write to the apostle respecting it. This letter he had received, as appears from the first verse of this chapter. On the general question of intercourse with unbelievers he treats in the fifth chapter, and decides that to keep company or eat with persons who make no pretension to religion is not unlawful, and that,

were all such persons to be esteemed unclean and their touch polluting, Christians must needs go out of the world. On the particular case of those members of the church who were married to unbelivers, the apostle treats in the chapter before us. He decides in verses 12 and 13 that they may lawfully dwell together, and in ver. 14, for the conviction and silencing of any members of the church who might object to his decision, he in substance says—'The unbelieving husband is not unclean, so that his wife may not lawfully dwell with him; the unbelieving wife is not unclean, so that her husband may not lawfully dwell with her. If they are unclean then your children are unclean, and not one parent in the whole church must dwell with or touch his children, until God shall convert them; and thus Christians will be made to sever the ties that bind parents to their children, and to throw out the offspring of Christian parents into the ungodly world from their very birth, without any provision for their protection, support, or religious education.'

"It will be perceived in the preceding interpretation, that the phrase *your children* is taken in a different sense from that which it obtains in any of the interpretations usually offered. It is here supposed to refer to the *whole church*. Had the apostle designed to speak of those children only who have one parent a believer and the other an unbeliever, he would have said (*tekna auton*) *their children*, instead of (*tekna humon*) *your children*. In addressing the church, and in giving general precepts, he uses the pronouns *ye* and *you* (see preceding chapter throughout, and verses 1 and 5 of this chapter). But, in ver. 8, where he gives directions applicable to particular cases, although he introduces the phrase, 'I say *to* the unmarried and widows,' he makes reference to these persons, not by the pronoun *you*, but *them*: 'It is good for *them* to abide even as I.' The same mode of speaking he continues to use as far down as to the

verse in question: 'Let *them* marry, let *him* not put her away,—let *her* not leave him.' After the same manner he would have said, 'Else were *their* children unclean,' had he intended only the children of such cases of mixed marriage as are referred to in the preceding part of the verse. What further confirms this opinion is, that in the original text the substantive verb is in the present tense: 'your children *are* unclean'—a mode of speaking more suited for the stating of a parallel than a dependent case.

"The general principles of the preceding interpretation fall in precisely with the course of the apostle's argument commenced in the 5th chapter. When these principles have been established, it is not of vital importance to the sense of the passage to determine the translation of the preposition *en*. Many have translated it *to*, as it is in the very next verse. This sense accords well with our interpretation. 'The unbelieving husband is sanctified *to* the wife,' just as it is said in Titus i. 15, 'Unto the pure all things are pure.' But perhaps the more literal rendering *in* will give the apostle's sense more accurately. While both parents lived in unbelief, they were unclean to themselves and to each other. 'Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience is defiled.' Titus i. 15. According to the Jewish rules respecting ceremonial cleanness, the conversion of one party would not render the other party holy. But in gospel ceremonies it is different. By the abrogation of the Jewish ceremonial law, and by the conversion of the wife, the *unbelieving husband* (*hagiastai*) *has become holy*, not in himself, but (*en to gynaiki*) *in the wife*. That the Jews considered Gentiles unclean, as stated above, may be proved from various passages of scripture: see Acts x. 28, xi. 3. John xviii. 28. Gal. ii. 12. Dr. Adam Clarke says, in his note on John xviii. 28, 'The Jews considered even the *touch* of a Gentile as a legal defilement.'

'It may now be asked, where is the proof which we propose to draw from this text against infant baptism? We have already proved that it makes nothing for it. On the contrary, it is clearly implied in the apostle's argument, that all the children of the Corinthian Christians had no nearer relation to the church than the unbelieving husband of a believing wife. He declares that their cases are parallel; and that rules of intercourse which would require the believing husband to separate from his unbelieving wife, would require believing parents to separate from their children. But there is no conclusiveness in this argument, if the children had been consecrated to God in baptism, and brought within the pale of the church; for then the children would stand in a very different relation to the church and to their parents, from that of the unbelieving husband or wife. Therefore, unless we charge the apostle with arguing most inconclusively, *infant baptism* and *infant church membership* were wholly unknown to the Corinthian church, and if to the Corinthian church, unquestionably to all the churches of those times."*

Those who are desirous of pursuing this matter further, will find it largely discussed in Mr. Tombes's Antipædobaptism, in the 11th and following sections,† and in Booth's Pædobaptism Examined, chap. xi. sect. 4.

CHRIST BLESSES CHILDREN.

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them." Mat. xix. 14, 15.

"And Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Mat. xviii. 2–4.

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* Pengilly's Scripture Guide to Baptism, Amer. edit. pp. 43, 44.

† Edit. Lond. 1652, p. 94, *et seq.*

One of the most touching arguments for infant baptism is, that it is the duty of Christian parents solemnly to devote their children to God; and there is something plausible in the plea, that the person is bound by his own act in thus consecrating his child to God in that holy ordinance. The idea that *the child* can be placed under moral obligation by an act performed upon him without his consent is preposterous; though continually affirmed by pædobaptist writers, it is contrary to the very first principles of reason and of moral government. Now, to the doctrine that the Christian parent is under the most solemn obligation to devote his children to God, and train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, I most cordially assent. But the question is, was the ordinance of baptism appointed either to bring the parent under that obligation, or to impress it more deeply upon his mind?* It is maintained that there is

* Mr. Booth's sentiments on this subject are well worthy of attention:—

"That it is lawful for a parent, or for a minister, to recommend an infant to God in solemn *prayer*, which is a capital branch of moral worship, we readily allow; and that the conduct of Christ on this occasion manifested his regard for little children is beyond a doubt; at the thought of which we are so far from being pained, that we rejoice. Yes, it is a matter of joy; because, in our view, it wears a smiling aspect on the final state of such as die in their infancy; and that without any restriction in reference to carnal descent, which limitation has the appearance of a Jewish tenet. But hence to infer that infants are entitled to baptism, any more than to the holy supper, is a conclusion wide of the mark—is making moral considerations the rule of administering positive institutions; of which there is no instance, and for which there is no reason, in the word of God. Besides, how awkwardly it looks thus to argue:—Christ expressed a condescending regard for little children *without* baptizing them, or saying a word about it; therefore we should manifest an affectionate care for infants *by* baptizing them! He who can fairly prove the point or make any advance towards it from such premises, must be a wonderful proficient in the art of syllogizing.

"Being sometimes requested by the parents of a new-born child to

no scriptural authority for such an idea; and our opponents, in reply, produce the passage above quoted. Under this passage a "near relation to the church" is claimed for the children of Christian parents; while, on the other hand, it is contended that the meaning our Lord designed to convey was, that "of persons of a childlike, tractable disposition is the kingdom of heaven." Our Lord had so expressly taught this doctrine a short time before, that this passage would appear to be clearly an inculcation of the same sentiment. Dr. Woods has treated this point in a candid manner, while, by an effort of critical ingenuity, he brings himself to decide in favour of the pædobaptist view. He says on the passage referred to:—

"Thus he directed the attention of those around him to the character of *a true disciple*. He represented a disciple, a member of his kingdom, to be *like a little child*, or *to be a child in disposition*. So that when, in the the next verse, he says, 'whosoever shall receive *one such child*,' the way was prepared for understanding him to mean *a person of a lowly disposition, a true disciple*. A person of this character had been made the subject of discourse—the subject on which the thoughts of all were fixed. In these circumstances, *paidion toiouton* must of course have been

unite with them in addressing the Father of mercies, we comply. On which occasion we frequently read some portion of scripture, give a word of exhortation to the parents respecting the education of their child, return thanks to the Giver of all good for the recent blessings bestowed on the family, and recommend the infant to God by earnest prayer; this procedure is wholly of a moral nature, and would have suited a pious Jew before the incarnation. It should be understood, that we do not object against the conduct of our pædobaptist brethren because they pray with the parents; because they exhort them to a diligent performance of parental duty; nor yet because they give up the child to God in solemn supplication, and solicit the best of blessings on its behalf: but because they perform an action upon it which is manifestly CEREMONIAL, and claim the highest authority for so doing."

taken to mean *a person of a child-like disposition*. And we find in verse 6, that *hena ton mikron, one of these little ones*, is *expressly* made to signify *one who believes in Christ*. He was speaking of such a one under the image of a child. And so he calls him a child."

Yet Dr. Woods deems there is an essential difference between these two passages. I present his ingenious ratiocinations to the reader, as an instance of that extreme refinement which is needful to realize the distinctions on which our pædobaptist friends rest. Yet it is difficult, even with the assistance of a copious *italicising*, to catch the idea, and still more difficult to perceive the force, of the following extract.

"There is then an obvious difference between the two passages. In one the attention is fixed upon the character of a christian as *the principal subject*. In consequence of the method which was taken to illustrate his character, it became perfectly natural to call him *a child*, a *little child*. *Paidion toiouton*, thus introduced, must have been understood to signify *a disciple of Christ*. But, in the other passage, the subject presented before the mind was *the little children themselves*. *They* were brought to Christ for his blessing. Upon *them* the attention of all was fixed. To *them* the objection of the disciples related. And surely what Christ said in the way of reply to that objection must also have related to *them*. We rest, then, on a general principle; namely, that words are to be taken in their literal sense, unless there is a plain and satisfactory reason for taking them in a metaphorical sense. In Matt. xviii. 5, there is such a reason. In Matt. xix. 14, there is not."

Is it not apparent, that, had Christ commanded the apostles to baptize these children into the church, the apostles would never have objected to Christ's blessing them? As the evangelist has not said one word about the baptism of

these children, why should we? Dr. Whitby, in reply to the suggestion that Christ did not baptize them, nor command the apostles to do it, admits that infant baptism was not yet practised, but adds by way of defence—

"That is not to be wondered at, if we consider that Christian baptism was not yet instituted, and that the baptism then used by John and Christ's disciples, was only the baptism of repentance and faith in the Messiah which was for to come, Acts xix. 4; of both which infants were incapable."

It is curious, indeed, that the doctor should imagine that Christ's disciples, who clearly did not baptize till after Christ had been manifested to the world by baptism, should have baptized in the faith of "the Messiah yet to come." And I presume that, now baptism is a sign of faith in a risen Saviour, infants are no more competent to believe that Christ has come, than that he would come.

Poole's Continuators observe:—

"We must take heed we do *not* found infant baptism upon the example of Christ in this text; for it is certain that he did not baptize these children. Mark only saith, he took them in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. The argument for infant baptism from this text is founded upon his words uttered on this occasion, and not upon his practice."

May we all be careful, neither to add to the statements of the divine word, nor to take from them! Want of due attention to the former deprives our pædobaptist brethren of the blessings associated with the ordinance of baptism. I rejoice, indeed, that, however much it deprives them of their happiness, and Christ of his honor now, it will not, unless it be a case of known and wilful disobedience, deprive them of a place in heaven; although they can never have the joy and glory of having either fulfilled this great command themselves, or of having led others thus to follow their Lord.

There are yet other passages which some of our pædobaptist friends endeavor to lay hold of; but they are so utterly irrelevant to the subject as not to require notice in a volume devoted mainly to historical investigation. One, however, I will mention, as it has often been quoted with a kind of triumph in favor of sprinkling—"So shall he sprinkle many nations," Isa. lii. 15. This is entirely a mistranslation, the Hebrew word signifying to *astonish*, *startle*, or *surprise*,* as when a man has water suddenly dashed in his face.

Of all the recent attempts to uphold sprinkling, that which seeks to find authority for a Christian ordinance in the writings of the Jewish prophets is perhaps the most singular. This is in keeping with the idea adopted by many pædobaptists (and it would seem by Dr. Woods), that the *arrangements of the Jewish economy may be copied into the Christian*, UNLESS THEY ARE FORBIDDEN. Where is it *forbidden* to Christian ministers to dress like Aaron? This is the very door which, once opened, admits all the judaizing practices of the church of Rome.† Judaizing teachers began

* Professor Conant, of Hamilton Theological Institution, one of the ablest Hebrew critics of the age, sustains this as the proper translation.

Rev. Albert Barnes says,—"The word (yazze) here rendered '*sprinkle*,' has been very variously rendered. The *Septuagint* renders it, 'So shall many nations wonder, or express admiration at him.' The *Chaldee*, 'So shall he scatter or dissipate many people.' The *Syriac*, 'Thus shall he purify, cleanse, or offer expiation for many nations.' Martini, Rosenmuller, and Gesenius, suppose that it is derived from an Arabic word, meaning to leap, to spring, to spring up, to leap for joy, to exult; and that the idea here is that he should cause many nations to exult or leap for joy. It may be remarked, that whichever of the above senses is assigned, it furnishes no *argument* for the practice of sprinkling in baptism. It refers to the fact of his purifying or cleansing the nations, and not to the ordinance of Christian baptism. Nor should it be used as an argument in reference to the mode in which that should be administered."—*Barnes' Notes on Isaiah*, vol. iii. pp. 411, 412.

† Dr. Woods, and pædobaptists generally, have drunk deep enough of this cup of poison to maintain, that, "in regard to the general end

to plague the church of Christ before the apostles had terminated their career; and the church is not yet freed from the baneful influence of notions, whose anti-apostolical descent may clearly be traced through the reformed churches to that of Rome, with her councils, and thence to the Fathers, who laid the foundation of her splendor and her tyranny, by propagating the "mystery of iniquity" which had already begun to work. That many of the Fathers are subject to this grave charge will be made apparent in a subsequent chapter.

sought, we consider the ministry of the gospel as substituted for the Levitical priesthood!"—*Lectures on Infant Baptism*, p. 142. This is another extract from the mystery of iniquity which laid the foundation of the tyrannical priestcraft of Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.—MODE OF BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

ON THE RIGHT USE OF CHURCH HISTORY.

The study of uninspired ecclesiastical history is the study of the progress of error: but it is not on this account the less important or instructive. Nothing can be more interesting or improving to the intelligent mind, than to contemplate the effects of erroneous doctrines and forms upon large masses of men in various ages of the world. The beacon-blaze that warns of danger is sometimes as needful as the light that guides to the desired haven. The necessity of investigating the history of the church on the subject of baptism, arises, however, from no deficiency of evidence respecting it in the inspired writings, but from the extent to which ecclesiastical history has been perverted by the opponents of the truth.

Let none imagine, therefore, that the unwavering testimony of the ancient church to immersion, as the apostolic mode of baptism, is valued otherwise than simply as confirmatory of a truth already clearly established from the sacred oracles; or that this investigation is entered upon for any other purpose, than to rescue ecclesiastical history from the misrepresentations which are still extensively circulated, under the authority of divines sustaining elevated positions in ecclesiastical society. It is true, indeed, that not only the most

learned English and German divines of the past and present age have unhesitatingly admitted the testimony of the early ages on this point; but that, in our own country, Professors Stuart and Woods do not hesitate to avow similar sentiments; but still, under the sanction of one of the most respectable ecclesiastical organizations of the age, the most perverted statements on this subject are extensively circulated,* and eagerly copied into the publications of other pædobaptist sects. A comprehensive exhibition of the facts of history on this subject, therefore, is neither uncalled for, nor unserviceable to the cause of truth.

The sources of evidence on this point are the writings of the Fathers—ancient baptisteries—the "ordines," or ritual regulations for the administration of baptism—the continued practice of the Greek and eastern churches—the circumstances in which pouring and sprinkling originated—and the admissions of modern ecclesiastical historians, all of them pædobaptists. On each of these points we shall place before the reader an ample supply of facts, from which he can form his own conclusions.

* "From the days of the apostles down to the reformation, affusion and sprinkling in baptism, as well as immersion, have been in common use; some of the gravest and most sober-minded writers, have firmly defended the two former, as well as the latter; the strong arguments in favor of affusion or sprinkling, as the preferable mode, have been, in all ages, distinctly appreciated; and it has ever been considered as a part of *Christian liberty* to use *either* mode, as may be conscientiously preferred."—*Dr. Miller's Treatise on Infant Baptism*, p. 98; published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

SECTION II.

THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS.

The term "Fathers" is applied to eminent personages in ecclesiastical history who lived prior to the sixth century. About fifty individuals are honored with this title.* Five of them, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, are alleged to have been contemporary with the apostles, and are therefore called apostolic Fathers. Twenty more lived prior to Christianity becoming a state religion in the days of Constantine, and the remainder subsequently to that period.†

Numerous passages might be quoted, in which the persons baptized are affirmed to be dipped, and in which circumstances possible only in case of immersion are particularly described. I select a few.

* Contemporaries of the apostles, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp. Papias, A. D. 116. Justin Martyr, 140. Dionysius of Corinth, 170. Tatian, 172. Hegesippus, 173. Melito, 177. Irenæus, 178. Athenagoras, 178. Miltiades, 180. Theophilus, 181. Clement of Alexandria, 194. Tertullian, 200. Minutius Felix, 210. Ammonius, 220. Origen, 230. Firmilian, 233. Dionysius of Alexandria, 247. Cyprian, 248. Novatus, or Novatian, 251. Arnobius, 306. Lactantius, 306. Alexander of Alexandria, 313. Eusebius, 315. Athanasius, 326. Cyril of Jerusalem, 348. Hilary, 354. Epiphanius, 368. Basil, 370. Gregory Nazanzen, 370. Optatus, 370. Ambrose, 374. Philaster, 380. Gregory of Nyssen, 390. Jerome, 392. Theodore of Mopsuestia, 394. Rufinus, 397. Augustine, 398. Chrysostom, 398. Sulpitius Severus, 401. Cyril of Alexandria, 412. Theodoret, 423; and Gennadius, 494.—*Encyc. Relig. Knowl.* p. 529.

† Observations on the writings of the Fathers, and on the moral and literary character of the early ages of the Christian church, will be found in chap. vii. sect. ii.

JUSTIN MARTYR, about A. D. 140, says, that "they went with the catechumens to a place where there was water."*

TERTULLIAN says, writing to some who denied baptism, "You act naturally, for you are serpents, and serpents love deserts and avoid water; but we, like fishes, are born in the water, and are safe in continuing in it—that is, in the practice of immersion." I am far too liberal, however, to concur in the opinion of Tertullian, that the reason why my brethren are water-haters is because they are serpents.

Another passage from TERTULLIAN—"There is no difference whether baptism takes place in the sea or in a pond, in the river or the fountain, the lake or the bath;† nor between those who were baptized in the Jordan by John, and those who were baptized in the Tiber by Peter." Again—"We are immersed three times, fulfilling somewhat more than our Lord has decreed in the gospel."

HERMAS says—"the water of baptism, into which men go down bound to death, but come up appointed unto life."‡

BARNABAS—"We go down into the water full of sins and pollutions, but come up out again bringing forth fruit, having in our heart the fear and hope which is in Jesus by the Spirit."§

AMBROSE—"You were asked, Dost thou believe in God Almighty? Thou saidst, I believe; and thus thou wast immersed (*mersisti*), that is, thou wast buried."‖

AUGUSTINE—"After you professed your belief, three times did we submerge (*demersimus*) your heads in the sacred fountain."¶

The expressions of Chrysostom in which he deduces the

* Apolog. ii. sect. 79.

† Tertull. de bapt. c. iv.

‡ Pastor, Sim. ix. § 16.

§ Epist. § 11. Whether these are the words of Hermas and Barnabas, or are only attributed to them, they indicate the practice of the early ages.

‖ De Sacr. lib. ii. c. 7.

¶ Hom. iv.

resurrection from baptism, and of the author of the Apostolic Constitutions, have already been quoted.

It is true that the practice of immersing three times prevailed in a very early age; but surely this was no approximation to sprinkling. Tertullian admits that it was "doing somewhat more than the gospel required." Basil* and Jerome† place it among those rites of the church derived from apostolic tradition. Chrysostom seems rather to refer it to the words of the commission.‡ Theodoret was of the same opinion.§ The practice of trine immersion prevailed, in the west as well as the east, till the fourth council of Toledo, which acting under the advice of Gregory the Great, in order to settle some disputes which had arisen, decreed that henceforth only one immersion should be used in baptism; and from that time the practice of only one immersion, gradually became general throughout the Western or Latin Church.

It is as needless as it would be endless, to multiply quotations from the Fathers relating to the universality of the practice of immersion, *excepting only in case of danger of death*. Because some instances of this kind are found, they have been spoken of as though they sustained the position that it was *immaterial* whether sprinkling or immersion were performed; while, on the contrary, they present the clearest evidence that immersion was dispensed with only because, while the ordinance was deemed essential to salvation, immersion was in these cases impracticable. The case of Novatian, as stated by Eusebius, will serve as an instance. Literally translated it reads thus:—"Who, assisted by the exorcists (having fallen into a dangerous disease,

* Basil de Sp. Sanct. cap. xxvii.

† Hieron. cont. Lucif. c. iv.

‡ Chrys. Hom. de Fide. tom. vii. p. 290.

§ Theod. Hæret. Tab. lib. iv. c. ii. p. 236.

and being supposed near to death), received [baptism] *being poured round* (*perikytheis*) on the bed on which he lay; if, indeed, it is proper to say that such a one could receive [baptism]." There is no word in the original for *baptism*, nor is it at all certain that this word ought to be supplied; indeed, there is the strongest probability that it ought not to be supplied, for *baptism*, when Eusebius wrote, meant immersion; and consequently there was a manifest reason for omitting the word altogether. The sense would be given by inserting after 'received' *the ordinance*, or some word of like import. This passage is a proof that, in the time of Eusebius, baptism was still understood to describe an *act*, as well as to designate a *rite*, and therefore Novatian could not be said to be *baptized*. The following is a translation of the note of Valetius on the word *perikytheis*:—"Rufinus rightly translates this, *perfusum* (*poured about*). For those who were sick were baptized in bed; since they could not be immersed by the priest, they were only *poured about* (*perfundibantur*) with water. Therefore baptism of this kind was *not* customary, and was esteemed *imperfect*, as being what appeared to be received by men laboring under delirium, not willingly, but from fear of death. *In addition, since baptism properly signifies immersion, a pouring of this sort could hardly be called baptism.* Wherefore clinics (for thus were they called who had received baptism of this sort) were forbidden to be promoted to the rank of the presbytery, by the twelfth canon of the council of Neo-Cæsarea."

Nothing can be more striking, as evidence of immersion being deemed the only legitimate baptism except in cases of the greatest emergency, than the expression used by Eusebius—*perikytheis*, *poured about*—clearly an application of water generally to the body, and not to the face only; which, had it been the case with Novatian, would have been sure to

have been mentioned, as it was designed to invalidate his baptism as much as possible, and no term implying the application of water to the face is employed.*

Baronius observes of cases of this kind that "those who were baptized upon their beds were not called *christians*, but *clinics*."†

All the exceptions to immersion which are to be found, are upon the principle of *danger of death*, or other *absolute necessity*, and do, therefore, but confirm the rule. Even the reasonings of Cyprian on this point, with which Dr. Miller is so much delighted, are entirely founded on the cases of those who had been baptized on their sick beds. The sole reason why the Fathers "poured about" individuals on sick beds was, that they fully believed baptism to be essential to salvation: those who follow their *practice* certainly encourage the *belief* from which that practice arose. The scriptures contain no intimation that either of the ordinances is to be introduced to the chamber of sickness and death. Each is a public commemorative act; not a "viaticum," a passport to heaven.

* For a very careful investigation of the case of Novatian in all its bearings, as well as for other acts of christian friendship, the author is indebted to Dr. Eaton, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Hamilton Theological Institution, New York.

† Annales Eccl. Cæsaris Baronii, &c. Moguntiæ. 1523. An. 254. sect. ix. p. 201.

‡ A case occurring under my own ministrations is in point. I visited a young lady who lay at the point of death; she gave evidence of piety, and expressed some desire to be baptized. I assured her that it could make no possible difference to her acceptance with God, whether, in her circumstances, she was baptized or not. Her friends sent for a Methodist minister, and she was sprinkled. She died in a short time afterwards. What is that but too much reason on baptism, and makes it a saving ordinance?

SECTION III.

ANCIENT BAPTISTERIES, AND PERSONS BAPTIZED IN THEM.

The primitive christians were under the necessity of baptizing either in open waters or in private baths; for the state of the law would not admit of their erecting public baptisteries. It would appear from some of their writings, that, in seasons more free from persecution, some had been erected in a simple manner before the reign of Constantine. During his reign they became comparatively common. The Catholic writers affirm that he built a magnificent baptistery at Rome, and that he was, together with his son, baptized there. "Baptisteries," says Mr. Robinson, "are first to be sought where they are first wanted, in towns and cities; for writers of unquestionable authority affirm that the primitive christians continued to baptize in rivers, pools, and baths, till about the middle of the third century.* At this time baptisteries began to be built; but there were none within the

* I append the names of the writers, with the references to the place in their works where the statements are to be found, as a specimen of the diligence and fidelity exhibited by Mr. Robinson. Whatever may be said respecting his theological sentiments and his satirical style, no man can impugn the extent of his research, or the correctness of his quotations.

"Writers. Pauli M. Paciaudii, *Antiq. Christian.* Diss. ii. cap. 1, 2, &c. *De Baptisteriis.* Rome, 1755. Walafridi Strabonis, *De Reb. Eccles. lib.* cap. 26. Joan. Steph. Durant *De Rit. Eccles.* lib. i. cap. xix. *De Baptisterio.* Parisiis, 1631. Josephi Vicecomitis *Observat. Eccles.* tom. i. lib. i. cap. iv. *An baptisteria semper in ecclesia fuerint? Et de more in fluminibus, fontibus, viis, ac carceribus baptizandi.* Mediolani. 1615. Joan. Ciampini *Vetera Monumenta*, cap. xxv. *De Ecclesia S. Joannis in fonte*, &c. Romæ, 1690. Mazocchi *Diss. Hist. De Cathed. Eccl. Neapolitana, semper unica.* Neapoli, 1751. Du Cangii. *Glossar. Baptisterium.* Sulpicii Severi, Dial. ii. 2. Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book viii. *Of the Baptistery.*"

churches till the sixth century: and it is remarkable that, though there were many churches in one city, yet (with a few exceptions) there was but one baptistery. This simple circumstance became in time a title to dominion, and the congregation nearest the baptistery, to whom in some places it belonged, and by whom it was lent to the other churches, pretended that all the others ought to consider themselves as dependent on them."*

It may not be improper to gratify the reader by a description of some of the most celebrated baptisteries of the Roman emperors. That of St. Sophia, erected by Constantine, and adorned by succeeding emperors, was splendid and spacious. "Justinian, at an immense cost, rebuilt it, and his artists with elegance and magnificence distributed variegated marbles of exquisite beauty, gold, silver, ivory, mosaic work, and endless ornaments, so as to produce the most agreeable and lasting effects on all beholders. The baptistery was one of the appendages of this spacious palace, something in the style of a convocation room in a cathedral. It was very large, and councils have been held in it, and it was called *magna phatisterium*, the great illuminatory. In the middle was the bath in which baptism was administered. It was supplied by pipes, and there were outer rooms for all concerned in the baptism of immersion, the only baptism of the place."†

The next baptistery in the scale of importance is that of the Lateran at Rome. "By various monuments since discovered, it is supposed Vespasian and other emperors resided in the Lateran area, too, and made it an imperial palace. The emperor Constantine gave this old building for a sort of parsonage-house, or rather an episcopal palace, to Sylvester, bishop of Rome; and, among other improvements, converted the family bath into a baptistery. Catholic historians

* Robinson's History of Baptism, p. 58. † Ibid. p. 63.

say Constantine adorned this baptistery with many images of gold and silver, and endowed it with a handsome income. However that might be, succeeding bishops of Rome repaired and adorned the baptistery; and Hilary, who was elected Pope in the year four hundred and sixty-one, and held his office seven years, added four oratories, or chapels, to it.

"A traveller entering Rome by the gate *del Popolo*, must go up the street *Strada Felice*, till he arrive at the church of St. John Lateran. Turning in, and passing along through the church, he must go out at the door behind the great choir, which lets him into a court surrounded with walls and buildings. On the left hand is a porch supported by two marble pillars, which lead into the octagon edifice called the baptistery. On entering, he will observe eight large polygonal pillars of porphyry support the roof, and there is a spacious walk all round, between them and the wall. In the centre of the floor, under the cupola, is the baptistery, properly so called, lined with marble, with three steps down into it, and about five Roman palms, that is, thirty-seven inches and a half, deep; for the Roman palm is seven inches and a half, English measure. Some antiquaries are of opinion, that this baptistery was deeper formerly. Perhaps it might have been before the baptism of youths was practised, but this, all things considered, is the most desirable of all depths for baptizing persons of middle size; and in a bath kept full, as this was, by a constant supply of fresh water, the gage was just, and any number might be baptized with ease and speed.

"The true standard depth of water for baptizing an individual is something less than two-thirds of the height, be that what it may; but the tallest man may be baptized in the Lateran depth, by only setting his right foot forward, and by bending his knees a little to lower his height, while the ceremony of bowing him in the water is performed."*

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 71–73.

The baptisteries at Ravenna deserve particular attention. "There are two of these buildings, one erected by the Arians in the reign of Theodoric, the other earlier, by the Catholics, in the reign of Valentinian. That now referred to is the catholic, and it was built, or rather rebuilt, in a more elegant taste, on the ground plot of the old one, by Neon, archbishop of Ravenna. Proper drafts of this beautiful little monument of antiquity were sent by Ciampini, archdeacon of the church of Ravenna, to Ciampini at Rome, and were published by the latter among other antiquities.

"This edifice is octangular, as is the Arian baptistery, and as almost all baptisteries were; at present, the two angles on the right and left hand sides, at the upper end, are carried out in a semicircular form, and parted off for oratories, or chapels. On entering the front door, you find yourself in an octangular room of about two and thirty English feet square. Exactly in the centre of this hall is a vast bath of white Grecian marble, or, in other words, an octangular receptacle for water, about nine feet square. Directly fronting the door, at that end of the baptistery which is furthest from it, is a marble pulpit, with two steps cut in the same block, from which elevated stand, probably, some teacher, overlooking the water, into which the pulpit projects a little, harangued the people before and during the time of baptism.

"Eight marble pillars, properly placed at the eight angles, support other pillars, and columns, and arches, which form the dome, which is ornamented with mosaic work of the utmost magnificence. At the top of the dome, within a large circle exactly in the middle, there is a representation of the baptism of Jesus. In the middle flows the river Jordan, and in the midst of that, up to his middle in water, stands Jesus Christ.

"This representation at Ravenna is not singular; for most artists of those ancient times described the baptism of Jesus

in the same manner. The doors of the very ancient church of St. Paul, in the suburbs of Rome, are plated with brass; the whole is divided into six perpendicular segments. Each segment is divided into nine parts, and each part contains one or more figures relating to the history of Jesus. It was formerly a most elegant exhibition, for the artist had let into the brass, with the graver, fine threads and filaments of silver. In the second square of the first segment on the left hand, is the representation of the baptism of Jesus. John is on the bank, with his right hand on the shoulder of Jesus, who stands in the middle of the river, his clothes lying by. The word 'baptism' is on the upper part. Much in the same manner he is described in the Greek church. The Greeks have a custom of exorcising and blessing water on the Epiphany, on which day they celebrate a festival in commemoration of the baptism of Christ. In this ceremony they divide the water with a cross on which the baptism of Jesus by the hand of John, attended by angels as before, is engraven. On the top are the Greek words, 'For he cometh unto John.' The missals for the same day are illuminated with figures very much like these. In all, Jesus is naked, but so represented as to appear perfectly delicate and chaste to the spectator. The same may be said of the picture of the baptism of St. Augustine, which is preserved in a church at Milan. At the top of the piece, in the left hand corner, are these words, THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST."*

This testimony to the immersion of our Lord would be of no value in itself; but, concurring as it does with that of all antiquity, and with that of the scriptures themselves, I cannot forbear to remark upon the course pursued by a few over-zealous paedobaptists, who would fain persuade the churches that there is not "a tittle of evidence from the New Testament that either our Lord or any one else was immersed."

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 81, 82, 86, 87.

In doubting the inspiration of Jesus, they set themselves in array against the whole church, true and apostate, except themselves. Can this afford other than unanswerable proof, both of that state of ignorance as to the facts of history in which these individuals suffer their respective charges to remain, and of the undue power of clerical influence, descending and yet remaining in churches reformed from the papal hierarchy? However free from such a censure in general, does not the charge brought by our Saviour against the Pharisees rest against these brethren on this point, that, having the key of knowledge, they neither enter themselves, nor suffer those that would?

"The baptistery at Florence is remarkable for the number of baths in its floor, and the magnificence of its furniture. There is a singular anecdote in the life of the celebrated Dante, relative to this subject. In the year thirteen hundred the poet was prior of Florence. At that time the baptistery was a most elegant building, and highly ornamented. There were in the floor several baths, where, at Easter, baptism was administered by immersion. In one of these a friend of the prior had been in danger of drowning; he therefore ordered them to be broken up."*

Before taking leave of the history of baptisteries, some interesting information may be gleaned from proceedings connected with the ancient fonts.

"When the baptism of infants became an established custom, it was unnecessary for the administrators to go into the water, and they contrived cisterns which they called fonts, in which they dipped the children without going into the water themselves. In the first baptisteries both administrators and candidates went down steps into the bath. In after ages the administrators went up steps to a platform, on which stood a small bath which they called a font, into

* Robinson's Hist. Bap. p. 89.

which they plunged children without going into the water themselves. In modern practice, the font remains, but a basin of water set into the font serves the purpose, because it is not now supposed necessary, either that the administrator should go into the water, or that the candidate should be immersed.

"This in England was custom, not law; for, in the time of queen Elizabeth, the governors of the Episcopal church, in effect, expressly prohibited sprinkling, by forbidding the use of basins in public baptism. 'Last of all (the churchwardens) shall see that in every church there be a holy font, *not a basin*, wherein baptism may be ministered, and it be kept comely and clean. Item, that the font be not removed, nor that the curate do baptize *in parish churches* in any *basins*, nor in any other form than is already prescribed,' &c. Sprinkling, therefore, was not allowed, except, as in the church of Rome, in cases of necessity at home, where a child born after one Sunday or festival was not likely to live till the next.

"That all fonts, fixed and moveable, were intended for the administration of baptism by dipping, is allowed by antiquaries, and a history of a few may serve to convince any man that their opinion is well founded.—Artificial fonts are comprehended in four classes, original, missionary, fancy, and ordinary parochial fonts.

"A font remarkable in ecclesiastical history is that belonging to the church of Notre Dame, in which Clovis, the first catholic, if not the first christian king of the Franks, was baptized. It stood without the church, and it is mentioned here for the sake of observing, that two opinions of baptism generally received are mere popular errors, expressly contradicted by this as well as by other ancient and authentic monuments.

"It is commonly said by such as allow immersion to have

been the primitive mode of baptism, that dipping was exchanged for sprinkling on account of the coldness of the climate of some countries in connexion with the Roman church. Here are two mistakes; the one that dipping was exchanged for sprinkling by choice, and the other that coldness of climate was the reason. It is not true that dipping was exchanged for sprinkling by choice before the reformation; for, till after that period, the ordinary baptism was true immersion, and sprinkling was held valid only in cases of *necessity*. In this font Clovis was dipped three times in water at his baptism. Modern French writers observe, with becoming dignity, that their first christian king had too much spirit to submit to profess a religion before he had examined whether it were true; and that Vedast and Remigius first instructed him in the doctrine of the holy Trinity, which he afterwards professed to believe by being thrice dipped at his baptism. More than three thousand Franks were baptized at the same season in the same manner: nor did sprinkling appear in France till more than two hundred and fifty years after the baptism of Clovis, and then it was invented, not as a mode of administering baptism in ordinary, but as a *private* relief in a case of necessity.—The other opinion of the coldness of the climate operating toward the disuse of immersion is equally groundless. Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, led all the first French historians into the error of believing that Clovis was baptized at Easter; but later historians have corrected this mistake, by remarking that Avitus, a contemporary writer better informed than Hincmar, who lived in the time of Charlemagne, three hundred and fifty years after the event—Avitus, who was intimate with Clovis, and who wrote to compliment him on his baptism, expressly declares he was baptized the night preceding Christmas-day. Andofleda, the sister of Clovis, was baptized at the same time by trine immersion, and no change

of the mode of administration was made, on account either of her sex, or her rank, or her health (which probably was doubtful, for she died soon after), or the season of the year. The baptism of this king was an event of so much consequence, that it made a principal article in the history of his life. It was recorded in an epitaph on his tomb, and the baptistery is there called a font, a full proof that font at that time signified a spacious bath.

"By fonts of *necessity*, are meant such convenient places to baptize in as missionaries made use of, when they had not time or ability to erect regular chapels for artificial baths. The old chroniclers of England say, the first missionaries from Rome baptized the Anglo-Saxons in rivers. And John Fox observes, that, 'whereas Austin baptized them in rivers, it followeth there was then no use of fonts;' but this is not quite accurate, for the monks called those parts of the rivers in which they administered baptism, fonts. It is also remarkable, that Paulinus, chaplain of the queen of Northumberland, when he had prevailed on Edwin her consort to profess the religion of the queen, hastily ran up a wooden booth at York, which he called St. Peter's church, and in which he catechised and baptized the king, and many of the nobility. Edwin, after his conversion, began to build of stone a cathedral on the spot, the walls of which were erected round about the wooden building, that being left standing in the centre, probably for a baptistery for the use of persons of rank, who might not choose to expose themselves before a gazing multitude. The same Paulinus baptized openly in the river Swale; 'for,' says Bede, 'they could not build oratories or baptisteries there in the infancy of the church.' Edwin afterward inclosed several springs by the road side in the north, and set there large basins of brass to wash or to bathe in, for the accommodation of travelers, and most likely, by advice of the monks, for the

purpose of baptizing. Pope Gregory says Austin baptized more than ten thousand persons on a Christmas-day.* Allowing this saint his usual privilege of affirming the thing that is not in regard to the number of persons baptized, it is very credible he spoke truth in respect to the day, for he had no interest to serve, but rather the contrary, for his interest in Italy was to set a gloss on Easter baptism; and the baptism of Clovis on the same day renders his testimony highly probable. If so, this is an additional proof that dipping was not exchanged for sprinkling on account of coldness of climate. It seems, then, Paulinus baptized in a river, because he had no baptismal chapels; and he baptized king Edwin and his court in a temporary wooden oratory, because he had not any such baptistery as the wealth and elegance of the Greeks and Romans had erected. In the twelfth century, Otho, bishop of Bamberg, baptized his converts in Pomerania in bathing tubs let into the ground and surrounded with posts, ropes extending from post to post, and curtains hanging on the ropes. Within the curtains the people undressed, were baptized, and afterward dressed again. Many of these also were used for baptism in the depth of winter, and the baths and tents were warmed by stoves.

"Among fonts of necessity, are to be placed such as were allowed to be used in private houses in cases of necessity. In a statute of Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, it is ordered, that, if a child should be baptized at home by a layman, in case of necessity, the remaining water should be either cast into a fire, or carried to the church and poured into the baptistery; and the vessel in which the child had been baptized should be either burned, or appropriated to the

* Gregor. I. *Epist.* lib. vii. Ep. xxx. Eulogio. *Episc. Alexandrino.* In solemnitate autem dominicæ nativitatis, quæ hac prima indictione transacta est, plusquam decem millia Angli ab eodem nunciati sunt fratre et coepiscopo [*Augustino*] baptizati.

use of the church. Canonists expound this statute by observing, that a true and proper baptism was a trine immersion by a priest, with orderly ceremonies, and nothing else; that, however, as baptism was essential to salvation, the church, in her great clemency for infants, allowed, in case of danger of immediate death and consequent damnation, a priest, or a layman, or any body, to baptize by pouring, or even by sprinkling, yea, by touching a toe or a finger of the babe with water; that for these purposes a bathing tub was to be prepared, and water (if possible) to dip, or (if that could not be) to use a part for sprinkling, on condition that the remaining water and the utensil be disposed of as above; and they add that the use to which the church applied such a vessel was that of washing in it surplices and altar cloths, and other ecclesiastical linen.

"*Fancy fonts* are such as were erected and decorated with a variety of ornaments, for the temporary purpose of one baptism.

"Always before the christening, and generally before the birth, of a royal child, a baptismal font was prepared. A baptismal travers was a high frame of wood, set on the floor like a screen, and hung with curtains of colored silks, satin, damask, or tapestry, plain, fringed, or embroidered, and set off at the top with deep valance and cornice, like the tester and head of a bed. The travers was a sort of retiring room, for the ladies who waited on the royal infant at the baptism, and it was furnished with chairs, cushions, pans of lighted well-burnt charcoal, basins, napkins, water (warm and cold), perfumes, and so on, 'ready for the chaunginge of the childe out of the clothes, and makinge it ready unto Christendome;' and 'afterwards to *washe* the childe if neade be, and to make him ready,' and dress him after his baptism.*

* I omit some particulars of these preparations, not wishing to expose their indelicacy, or to excite ridicule.

"Sometimes an old font of stone was set, at other times a new one was made, but generally a silver font, kept at Canterbury for the purpose, was fetched and used on this occasion. Whatever it were, it was hung round withoutside with cloth of gold, and covered withinside and at bottom with raynes, that is, soft linen gathered and puckered in many folds, and intended, no doubt, to prevent any accidental bruising of the tender babe. Over the font was a large and rich canopy of damask, satin, sarcenet, or raynes, bordered and valanced with fringe or cloth of gold. The whole was magnificent, and the taste of the ladies regulated every part.

"At the baptism of Prince Edward, afterward King Edward VI., in the chapel of Hampton Court, archbishop Cranmer stood godfather for the prince, as he had done four years before for the princess Elizabeth, who was born at Greenwich, and baptized in the conventual church of the Franciscan friars. Similar pomp was displayed at both, and the whole ceremonial is inserted in histories of the times. A detail would be tedious. It may be remarked, the princess was born in September, the prince in October; but both were carried to church, and baptized in public, and both by trine immersion, so that dipping had not then been exchanged for sprinkling on account of cold.

"In the last class may be placed all fonts in *parish churches* for the public ordinary baptism of children. These came forward along with infant baptism. All these fonts were evidently intended for dipping, as the size of them proves, and as the laws and rubrics of the church ordain. Writers on topographical antiquities mention a great many, and the learned and indefatigable author of that complete body of information entitled British Topography, hath taken the pains on this, as on all other articles, to arrange and class the materials with wonderful precision, for the benefit of investigators. It may be proper to run the eye over some

of the most remarkable fonts. The continent would furnish many, but a few of this country [England] will serve to elucidate this article.

"Grymbald was a native of French Flanders, and Alfred, the glory of the Saxon kings, brought him into England in the year eight hundred and eighty-five, and placed him at Oxford. There, in the first school founded by Alfred, he taught divinity along with the Abbot Neot, and he may justly be reputed, as by the Oxonians he is, one of the founders and first ornaments of that noble university. The old church of St. Peter was built by Grymbald, and a part of it remains entire to this day. In this church there was till lately a very ancient baptismal font, of elegant sculpture for the time. Mr. Hearne thought it was of the same date as that of Winchester; and he adds, after it had kept its place about five hundred years, it was ordered to be removed, and one much inferior to be put in its place. It was therefore turned out, and put over a well. It is in circumference eleven feet, and of proportional depth. In separate niches the twelve apostles are represented. The upper part is bordered with a running sprig. The form is circular. The place, the size, and the sculpture serve to inform a spectator, that, in the opinion of the donor, the *dipping* of children, according to the prescribed form of the church, was *apostolical* baptism.

"In the church of Bridekirk, near Cockermouth, in Cumberland, there is 'a large open vessel of greenish stone,' which antiquarians pronounce a Danish font. It is doubtless a very ancient, a very rude, and a very singular curiosity. That it was intended for a baptismal font *ab origine*, as Bishop Gibson observes, cannot be questioned; for on the east side the baptism of Christ is represented. Jesus stands naked 'in a kind of font or vase, with a nimbus almost defaced round his head, and over him a dove.' On his right

hand, near the font, stands John the Baptist, his left hand being behind the shoulders of Jesus, and his right on his side.

"Among the plates published by Mr. Strutt,* there is one from a manuscript life of Richard, earl of Warwick, which represents 'how he was baptized, having to his godfathers king Richard the second and seynt Richard Scrope, then [1381] bishop of Lichefield, and after in processe of tyme he was archebishop of Yorke.' This plate Mr. Strutt took from 'a very curious and valuable manuscript in the Cotton Library, marked Julius, E. iv. The original delineations, together with the writing, are all done by the hand of John Rouse, the Warwickshire antiquary and historian, who died the 14th of January, 1491, the seventh year of Henry the seventh. It is illustrated with fifty-three excellent delineations, which fully explain the manners and customs of the times in which they were done.' Round a neat Saxon font the company stand. A bishop is holding the child, stark naked, and just going to be dipped over the font. The hand of the royal godfather is on his head. The archdeacon, according to custom, stands by the bishop, holding up the service-book open, which implies that the baptism is performing according to the ritual. As the child's face is toward the water, this is the last of the three immersions, and the bishop may be supposed now uttering the last clause of the baptismal words—*and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.* The priest on the other side of the officiating bishop is holding the chrism. Fonts, like medals, form a history, and from a history of font, incontestible evidence rises to prove that, during the whole reign of popery (in England), public ordinary baptism was administered by immersion; that the mode was not changed to sprinkling here, any more than on the continent, for such considerations as climate or timidity, rank

* View of Manners, &c. vol. ii. plate viii. p. 121.

or caprice; and that in the public opinion there was no hazard to health in dipping infants. The noble babe, whose baptism is here represented, was born on the twenty-eighth of January, at Salwarp, in the county of Worcester."*

I take the fact to be established, so far as the history of baptisteries bears upon the point (which it does with irresistible force), that the practice of dipping was not only usual, but considered necessary, except in particular cases arising from danger of death, or other special circumstances, for thirteen centuries after Christ, throughout all countries where any form of Christianity existed.

SECTION IV.

THE 'ORDINES,' OR RITUAL REGULATIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM.

THE design of this volume being to put the reader in possession of all the facts, or rather of some instances of every class of facts, relating to the history of baptism, the directions for the administration of baptism which have been preserved by the different churches will now be submitted to his consideration.

"The Greeks divided their institutes into two classes, the scriptural and the traditional. The division was merely speculative, for they thought both equally binding. Basil gives an instance in baptism.† 'The Scripture says, "Go

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. pp. 111, 113–120, 122-127.

† Op. *De Sancto Spiritu*, Cap. xxvii. Jam ter mergerat hominem, unde ex scriptura haustum? Reliqua item quæ fiunt in baptismo, veluti renuntiare Satanæ et angelis ejus, ex qua scriptura habemus? Nonne ex minime publicata et arcana hac traditione? Nonne ex doctrina, quam patres nostri silentio quieto, minime curioso servarunt, &c.

ye, teach and baptize," and tradition adds, Baptize by *trine* immersion; and, if any bishop or presbyter shall administer baptism not by three dippings, but by one, let him be punished with deprivation.' At what time this canon was made, and by whom it was first called an apostolical canon, is uncertain; but it was early received for law by the established Greek church, it was in full force when the cathedral of St. Sophia was built, and no person dare baptize any other way in the Sophian baptistery."*

One of the principal duties of deacons and deaconesses (of the former there were one hundred and fifty, and of the latter forty, attached to the church of St. Sophia,) was to attend on the candidates for baptism.†

"The office of deaconesses continued in all churches, eastern and western, till the eleventh century: then it fell into disuse, first in the Roman church and then in the Greek, but it continued longer in the oriental churches, and the Nestorian hath deaconesses to this day. The duration of these female officers is allowed to afford probable proof of the duration of the baptism of adults by immersion."‡

It is unnecessary to quote more particularly from the Greek rituals. It is sufficient to state that they all require trine immersion.

The sermons preached on baptismal occasions afford evidence of a similar character, both as to the subjects and the mode. The latter is at present under consideration; and I shall give an extract from a discourse by Basil, archbishop of Cæsarea, which will indicate clearly how they baptized in the Greek church in the fourth century.

"How can we be placed in a condition of likeness to his

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. p. 63.

† It would be well if these officers attended as promptly and solemnly to their duties in the true church as they appear to have done in the apostate.

‡ Robinson's Hist. Bapt. p. 64.

death? By being 'buried with him in baptism.' How are we to go down with him into the grave? By imitating the 'burial' of Christ in baptism; for the bodies of the baptized are in a sense buried in water. For this reason the apostle speaks figuratively of baptism, as a 'laying aside the works of the flesh: ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism,' which in a manner cleanses the soul from the impurity of its natural carnal affections, agreeably to this saying, 'Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.' This is not like the Jewish purifications, washing after every defilement, but we have experienced it to be one cleansing baptism, one death to the world, and one resurrection from the dead, of both which baptism is a figure. For this purpose the Lord, the giver of life, hath instituted baptism, a representation of both life and death; the water overflowing as an image of death, the Spirit animating as an earnest of life. Thus we see how water and the Spirit are united. Two things are proposed in baptism; to put an end to a life of sin, lest it should issue in eternal death, and to animate the soul to a life of future sanctification. The water exhibits an image of death, receiving the body as into a sepulchre: the Spirit renews the soul, and we rise from a death of sin into a newness of life. This is to be 'born from above of water and the Spirit:' as if by the water we were put to death, and by the operation of the Spirit brought to life. By 'three immersions,' therefore, and by three invocations, we administer the important ceremony of baptism, that death may be represented in a figure, and that the souls of the baptized may be purified by divine knowledge. If there be any benefit in the water, it is not from the water, but from the presence of the Spirit; for baptism doth not 'save us by

putting away the filth of the flesh,' but by 'the answer of a good conscience towards God.'"*

The Roman ordines will now demand our attention. "To prevent confusion in a public worship conducted by a great many persons, as well as to preserve uniformity, prudence early suggested the use of ordinals, marking every person's part, his place, his dress, his words, and all his actions and gestures. Copies went from church to church, as tunes do now, and at length ordinals obtained a general likeness and displayed an infinite variety.

"Father Mabillon, having observed that the vulgar Roman ordo was a confused collection of several ordines, collected with infinite pains the most ancient copies, and collated, corrected, and published sixteen. Various as these are, the first being of the ninth (supposed to describe the seventh or eighth) century, and the last of the fourteenth, the order of baptism differs much less than could have been imagined; for, in regard to the mode, there is not a trace of sprinkling or pouring;—it is dipping, and in some wine immersion; and to this manner of baptizing every word agrees, as going down into the baptistery, coming up out of it, undressing, dressing, napkins, vestments, &c."

An extract from the twelfth ordinal in Father Mabillon's collection, written by a cardinal in the latter part of the twelfth century, relating as it does to the ordinance of baptism as performed by the Pope himself, will be interesting. "The pope went on to the baptismal hall, and, after various lessons and psalms, consecrated the baptismal water. Then, while all were adjusting themselves in their proper places, his holiness retired into the adjoining chapel of St. John the evangelist, attended by some acolothists, who took off his habits, put on him a pair of waxed drawers and a surplice, and then returned to the baptistery. There three children

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. pp. 65, 66.

were waiting, which was the number usually baptized by the pontiff. Silence was ordered. When the first was presented, he asked, What is his name? The attendant answered, John. Then he proceeded thus. John, dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth? I do believe. Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was born and suffered death? I do believe. Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life eternal? I do believe. John, do you desire to be baptized? I do desire it. I baptize thee in the name of the Father (dipping him once), and of the Son (dipping him a second time), and of the Holy Ghost (dipping him a third time). The pontiff added, May you obtain eternal life. John answered, Amen. The same was then repeated to Peter and Mary, the other two. Attendants with napkins received the children, and retired to dress them. The attendants of his holiness threw a mantle over his surplice, and he retired. The rest of the catechumens were baptized by deacons, who, in clean habits and without shoes, went down into the water, and performed the ceremony as the pontiff had set them an example. After all was over and the children dressed, they waited on the pope in an adjacent room, where he confirmed them, and delivered to each chrism and a white garment."

If relaxation from the supposed unpleasantness of going "down into the water" had been admitted in any case, surely the pontiff himself would have claimed exemption; but we find that even the head of the most corrupt of all ecclesiastical bodies had not so far corrupted himself as to depart on this point from the law of Christ, so late as the twelfth century. As none dare affirm that the papacy introduced immersion, I ask, why did the pope put on waxed

cloth trowsers on Easter Sunday, if "sprinkling, as the preferable mode, had been in all ages duly appreciated?"

I close this section with referring the reader to the ritual of the Church of England. The first liturgy, in 1547, enjoins a true immersion, in case the child is not sickly. "If they [the godfathers and godmothers] shall certify him [the priest], that the child may well endure it, *he shall dip it in the water* discreetly and warily: but, if they certify that the child is weak, *it shall suffice* to pour water upon it."*

SECTION V.

PRACTICE OF THE GREEK AND OTHER EASTERN CHURCHES.

It has already been stated that all the Greek rituals require true immersion; such has also been the invariable *practice* of that church. Sir P. Ricaut, writing on the present state of the Greek church, observes:—"Thrice dipping or plunging this church holds to be as necessary to the form of baptism, as water to the matter." Dr. King attests that "the Greek church uniformly practises true immersion," and adds, "undoubtedly the most primitive manner:"† and Dr. Wall affirms, that "the Greek church, in all its branches, does still use immersion."‡

* Dr. Wall, in his History of Infant Baptism, says: "In the Church of England, it being allowed to weak children (in the reign of Queen Elizabeth) to be baptized by affusion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and afterwards, by degrees, the common people, would obtain the favor of the priest to have their children pass for weak children, too tender to endure dipping in the water. As for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was, at 1645, just then beginning, and used by very few."

† Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, p. 192.

‡ History of Inf. Bapt. vol. iii. p. 376.

There are several bodies of Christians among the eastern nations, who are not under the dominion of either the Greek or Roman churches. Of these the Nestorians, so denominated from Nestor, a patriarch of Constantinople, who separated from the Greek church in the fifth century, are one of the most interesting. Their liturgy is evidently taken from that of the ancient Greek church. Their method of baptizing is thus described:—"The candidate goes into the baptistery, which they call Jordan, where the priest reads lessons and prayers, after which the auditors are dismissed, the gates shut, and the catechumen repeats the Nicene creed. Next the catechumen-oil and the baptismal water are blessed, after which a deacon anoints the catechumen all over, and then leads him to the priest, who, standing on the west side of Jordan,* turns the face of the catechumen to the east, and, laying his hand upon his head, bows him forward into the water a first time, saying, *Such a one, the servant of God, is baptized in the name of the Father*, to which the company answer, *Amen:* then bowing him a second time, he says, *and of the Son*,—answer as before, *Amen:* then a third time, saying, *and of the Holy Ghost*,—*Amen*. The baptized is then clothed, and the deacon leads him out of the baptistery, and delivers him to his friends in waiting."†

"The Armenians invariably practise immersion. Chardin, who was present at Zulfa at the Armenian festival called Cachachouran, that is, the baptism of the cross, observes, that the Mahommedans call christian baptism *sebjah, dying*, because they always see it performed by immersion, or plunging; by which, he adds, it may be judged that they

* Assemani, tom. iii. p. ii. cap. vii. s. 9. *De Baptismo.*—Catechumeni recitant symbolum Nicænum . . . . . Sacerdos, stans ad partem occidentalem Jordanis, faciem pueri vertit ad orientem, eumque in aquam immergit, imponens manum suam super caput ejus, et dicens, baptizatur, talis, &c.

† Robinson's Hist. Bapt. pp. 485, 486.

know nothing of the western practice of baptizing by aspersion."* Mr. Wolf, the missionary, says, that "the priest (of Armenia) puts the child into the water, and washes the head with three handfuls of water, and prays, and saith, 'I baptize thee in the name,' &c., and then dips† the child,"‡ &c. This is confirmed by missionaries Smith and Dwight, who say that, according to the rules of the Armenian church, baptism consists in plunging the whole body in water three times, as the sacred formula is repeated.§

The Asiatic Jacobites, inhabiting principally Syria and Mesopotamia, the African Jacobites, the Copts, and the Abyssinians, administer baptism by trine immersion, as also do the Georgians. In fact, as Dr. Wall states, no branch of the nominally Christian church, however corrupt in other respects, has dared to change the law of immersion into sprinkling, except the Roman hierarchy, and those churches which derived sprinkling from that polluted source.

SECTION VI.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF POURING AND SPRINKLING.

The history of baptism, so far as the mode is concerned, will be completed by inquiring when, where, and how sprinkling was introduced; what opposition it had to contend with, and what triumphs it achieved among the western nations of Europe.

* Ibid. pp. 490–493.

† I perceive that some pædobaptist authors, omitting the words, "and then dips the child," bring this passage in proof of *pouring*.

‡ Bapt. Mag. 1826, vol. xviii. p. 29.

§ Miss. Research. in Armenia, p. 312.

It has already been found in Africa, in the time of Cyprian, where it obtained from him a favorable expression of his opinion. In fact, wherever the doctrine of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation, even in the case of babes, was admitted, it became contrary to nature to maintain that immersion alone was baptism; for, in that case, many dear little infants and others must be lost. It would seem that in France, in the eighth century, many of the clergy had, in cases where immersion was impracticable or very difficult, volunteered to modify their practice by pouring or sprinkling, as the case might require. Such a practice, however, even in this case, having the sanction of no ecclesiastical authority, the French clergy availed themselves of the opportunity presented by the presence of Pope Stephen II. (who, having been driven from Rome by the Lombards, had fled to France, to claim the protection of Pepin) to inquire, among other points of difficulty, if, in certain cases, pouring or sprinkling might not be considered as valid baptism. Stephen, well inclined to accommodate the French clergy by the promise of their royal master to take up his cause, and to expel the Lombards from his dominions, gave such a reply as they desired. The precise question proposed was, whether, *in case of necessity* occasioned by illness of an infant, it were lawful to baptize by pouring water out of the hand, or a cup, on the head of the infant. Stephen answered, "If such a baptism were performed, in such a case of *necessity*, in the name of the Holy Trinity, it should be held valid."*

This answer of Stephen's is the first public authority for private baptism, and for sprinkling. The learned Basnage observes, "that it allows sprinkling only in case of imminent danger; that the authenticity of it is denied by some Catholics; that many laws were made after this time in Germany, France, and England, to compel dipping, and without any

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. p. 429.

provision for cases of necessity; thereby [illegible] that this law did not alter the mode of dipping in public baptisms; and that it was not till five hundred and fifty-seven years after that the legislature, in accordance with Rowena's law in the year thirteen hundred and eleven, declared dipping or sprinkling indifferent."*

That immersion was the mode in which converts in the "fatherland" were baptized is manifest, not only from the history of baptisteries and fonts, already treated of, but from the earliest historical records.

Venerable Bede states that the king and queen of the Northumbrians, "having been instructed in the word of Christ's salvation, were washed in the river Glen as the bath of regeneration." Immediately after he speaks of Paulinus baptizing in the Swale, as no oratory or baptistery was as yet erected.†

In process of time, however, the French fashion of sprinkling began to grow popular, as is evident from its frequent denunciation by the provincial councils. The following of these ecclesiastical assemblies issued decrees enforcing immersion: York, A. D. 1196; London, A. D. 1200; Salisbury, A. D. 1217; Worcester, A. D. 1224; Exeter, A. D. 1287; Worcester, A. D. 1306.

It is, certainly, a singular circumstance, that the reformed churches should have fallen into the error of the church of Rome, not only in their practice respecting the subjects of baptism, the antiquity of which might have formed some kind of excuse, though a very inadequate one, but in the then recent innovation of sprinkling. Although, however, this is the present practice of the reformed churches of Europe, it was far from being the case generally in the earlier days of the reformation.

* Basnagii Monument. vol. i. Præfat. c. v. sect. 4.

† Historia Ecclesiastica Gent. Anglic. A VEN. BEDA, presbyter. Script. Cantab. 1644. Lib. II. cap. 14, p. 146.

How the English reformers understood the matter is clear from the first liturgy of King Edward VI., which required baptism to be administered by trine immersion.* "What greater shame can there be, than a man to professe himself to be a Christen man because he is baptized, and yet he knoweth not what baptisme is, nor what strength the same hath, nor what the *dyppyng* in the water doth betoken . . . . when God is added and joyned to the water, then it is the *bathe* of regeneracion . . . . a *bathe* that washeth our soules by the Holy Ghoste, as Saynct Paule calleth it, saying, God hath saved us thorowe hys mercye by the *bathe* of regeneracion . . . . for baptisme and the *dyppynge* into the water doth betoken that the olde Adam, with all his sinne and evel lustes, ought to be drowned and kylled by daily contrition and repentance."

In like manner William Tyndal, otherwise called Hychins, speaks of baptism:—"The *plungynge* into the water sygnyfyeth that we dye and are *buryed* with Chryst, as concernynge the old lyfe of Synne which is Adam. And the *pullynge* out agayn sygnyfyeth that we *ryse agayne* with Chryste in a newe lyfe."†

It is a singular fact that sprinkling was not substituted for immersion, either in England or Scotland (however it might have been resorted to in cases of danger), till after the reformation. Edward VI. and Elizabeth were both immersed, as the records of royalty testify. The successor of Elizabeth, (James I.) was from Scotland, and had been initiated into

* *Catechismus*, that is to say, a short instruction into Christian religion for the synguler commodite and profyte of chyldre and yeng people. Set forth by the mooste reverende father in God, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, and Metropolitane. GUALTERUS LYNNE excudebat. 1548.

† *The obedyence of a Chrysten man;* and how Chrysten rulers ought to gouerne, wherein also (yf thou marke dilygently) thou shalte fynde eyes to perceyue the craftye conveyance of all jugglers. Fo. lxxvi. *Baptysm.*

sprinkling by the Scotch divines, who had imported it from Geneva, and he favored its practice in England. During the Protectorate, when Presbyterianism was in the ascendant, the Assembly of Divines debated the manner in which baptism should be directed in their formularies, and decided, by a vote of twenty-five to twenty-four, that sprinkling alone should be mentioned, without reference to immersion. This decision, however, had nothing to do with the ritual of the Episcopal church, which at the restoration again became the national church, and which still retains the *direction* for dipping, although it has admitted the *practice* of sprinkling.

The Edinburgh Encyclopedia, than which a more able or satisfactory witness could not be produced,* thus describes, (in the article on baptism,) the introduction of sprinkling into Scotland. "In this country, however, *sprinkling was never used in ordinary cases till after the reformation.* During the persecution of Mary, many persons, most of whom were Scotsmen, fled from England to Geneva, and there greedily imbibed the opinions of that church. In 1556, a book was published at that place, containing 'The Forms of Prayer and Ministration of the Sacraments approved by the famous and godly learned man, John Calvin,' in which the administrator is enjoined to 'take water in his hand, and lay it upon the child's forehead.' These Scottish exiles, who had renounced the authority of the pope, implicitly acknowledged the authority of Calvin; and, returning to their own country, with Knox at their head, established sprinkling in Scotland."

I know not how I can conclude this chapter better than by using the words of Professor Stuart.

"We have collected facts enough to authorize us now to come to the following general conclusion respecting the practice of the Christian church in general with regard to the mode

* The Encyclopedia Americana is also equally satisfactory. See art. *Baptism*, vol. i. p. 557.

of baptism, viz., that from the earliest ages of which we have any account subsequent to the apostolic age, and downward for several centuries, the churches did generally practise baptism by immersion,* perhaps by immersion of the whole person; and that the *only exceptions* to this mode which were usually allowed were cases of urgent sickness, or other cases of immediate and imminent danger, where immersion could not be practised. It may also be mentioned here, that *aspersion* and *affusion*, which had in particular cases been now and then practised in primitive times, were gradually introduced, and became, at length, quite common, and in the western church almost universal, before† the reformation."

The learned professor's clause—"perhaps by immersion of the whole person"—is a literary curiosity. In all history the candidates are described as descending into the water about up to their waist, and then their heads, or the upper part of the body, were immersed by the administrator—the very method practised by the Baptists now. Some then, as now, bowed the head forward, some leaned the body backward; but how Mr. Stuart, in either of these methods, or in any other when a person is standing in the water up to the waist, can submerge the head without the whole body being under water, is what neither he nor any one else can tell. This "perhaps" might well have been spared.

Can any historical evidence be more complete respecting the time and the causes of the introduction of the innovation of sprinkling? May I respectfully ask the pædobaptist who reads this volume (Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, or Methodist), 1. Whether he has not been kept in

* The reader will observe how directly the professor at Andover contradicts the professor at Princeton.—"A house divided against itself cannot stand." Will Professor Stuart's publisher explain why his work is kept out of print?

† The reader will be able to correct Professor Stuart, by substituting the words *soon after* for "before."

ignorance of these facts? 2. Whether those clergy who withhold these facts from their flocks do not take upon themselves an undue and dangerous responsibility? 3. Whether he will have independence enough to take any adequate means to ascertain if these statements can be denied? And, finally, whether, if they cannot be gainsaid, he will remain *unbaptized*, and in a state of disobedience to the King of kings?

SECTION VII.

ADMISSIONS OF PEDOBAPTIST ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIANS AND DIVINES.

In a previous portion of this volume, the testimony of numerous learned theologians, both ancient and modern, has been laid before the reader, respecting both the meaning of the term *baptizo*, and the practice of the apostles. I shall now place before him a few passages from the writings of pedobaptists respecting the *practice of the primitive church*, which prove, not only that immersion was generally practised, but that *no other practice was regarded as* APOSTOLIC. Nothing can be more clear than that the validity of baptism in the cases of those who were affused when in danger of death, was a matter of earnest debate; which could not possibly have been the case, had the practice been deemed apostolical.

MOSHEIM.—"The sacrament of baptism was administered in this [the second] century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font. Those adult persons that desired to be baptized [among the collectanea] received the sacrament of baptism

according to the ancient and primitive manner of celebrating that institution, *ever by immersion.*"*

GROTIUS.—"That baptism used to be performed by immersion and not pouring, appears both from the proper signification of the word, and the places chosen for the administration of the rite (John iii. 23, Acts viii. 38), and also from the many allusions of the apostles, which cannot be referred to sprinkling. (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.)"†

BOSSUET.—"The baptism of John the Baptist, which served for a preparative to that of Jesus Christ, was performed by plunging. When Jesus Christ came to John, to raise baptism to a more marvellous efficacy in receiving it, the scripture says *that he went up out of the water* of Jordan. (Matt. iii. 16; Mark i. 10.) In fine, we read not in the scripture that baptism was otherwise administered; and we are able to make it appear, by the acts of councils and by the ancient rituals, that for *thirteen hundred years* baptism was thus administered *throughout the whole church*, as far as was *possible*."‡

DR. WHITBY.—"It being so expressly declared here (Rom. vi. 4, and Colos. ii. 12) that we are *buried with Christ in baptism* by being buried under water; and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death, by dying to sin, being taken hence; and this immersion being religiously observed *by all Christians for thirteen centuries*, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, even without any allowance from the author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, being that which the Romanist still urgeth to justify his refusal of the cup to the laity."§

* Eccles. Hist. Cent. ii. Part ii. chap. iv. § 8. and Cent. xvii. sec. ii. P. ii. chap. vii. § 1.

† Apud Poli Synops. ad Mat. iii. 6.

‡ In Mr. Stennet against Russen, p. 175, 176.

§ Note on Rom. vi. 4.

Dr. Wall.—"Their [the primitive Christian] general and ordinary way was to baptize by immersion, or dipping the person, whether it were an infant or grown man or woman, into the water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak endeavors of such pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it, so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the *profane scoffs* which some people give to the English antipedobaptists, merely for their use of dipping. It was in all probability the way by which our blessed Saviour, and for certain was the most usual and ordinary way by which the ancient Christians did receive their baptism. 'Tis a great want of prudence, as well as of honesty, to refuse to grant to an adversary what is certainly true, and may be proved so. It creates a jealousy of all the rest that one says. As for sprinkling, I say, as Mr. Blake *at its first coming up in England*, 'let them defend it who use it.' They [who are inclined to presbyterianism] are hardly prevailed on to leave off that *scandalous* custom of having their children, though never so well, baptized out of a basin, or porringer, in a bed-chamber—hardly persuaded to bring them to church, much farther from having them dipped, though never so *able to bear it.*"*

John Wesley.—"Mary Welsh, aged eleven days, was baptized, according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion. The child was ill then, but recovered from that hour."†—"'*Buried with him*,' alluded to the ancient manner of baptizing [by immersion."‡

Tholuck, on Romans, vi. 4.—"In order to understand

* Hist. of Inf. Bapt. Part II. chap. ii. p. 462.

† Extract of Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from his embarking for Georgia, p. 11.

‡ Wesley's Notes on Rom. vi. 4.

the figurative use of baptism, we must bear in mind the *well known fact*, that the candidate in the primitive church was immersed in water and raised out of it again."

WINER, in manuscript Lectures on Christian Antiquities. —"In the apostolic age baptism was by immersion, as its symbolical explanation shows."

OLSHAUSEN, Com. vol. i. p. 158.—"John's baptism was in all probability like christian baptism, not only because the administrator immersed the candidate, but because a formula was used at the immersion." p. 176. "The one half of the act, immersion, represents the negative part, the removal of the old; the other half, emersion, represents the positive, the introduction of the new." So BENGEL and USTER.

BRETSCHNEIDER, Theology, vol. i. p. 684.—"The apostolic church baptized only by immersion."

GUERICKE, Ch. Hist. vol. i. p. 100.—"Baptism was originally administered by immersion."

RHEINWALD, Archæology, 1830, p. 303, n. 1.—"Immersion was the original apostolical practice."

HAHN, Theology, p. 556.—"According to apostolical instruction and example, baptism was performed by immersing the whole man."

STARCK, History of Baptism, p. 8.—"In regard to the mode, there can be no doubt that it was *not by sprinkling*, but by immersion."

J. H. FRITSCH, Bib. Theology, 1820, vol. iii. p. 507.—"With infant baptism still *another* change in the outward form of baptism, was introduced, that of *sprinkling with water*, instead of the former practice of immersion."*

* It may be edifying to some of our readers to learn how far Dr. Miller, of Princeton, has kept pace with the great critics of the age. In his work on Baptism, published in 1835, he says, "*There is not the smallest possibility that he (John) ever baptized an individual in this manner (by immersion!*") p. 93. "The sacred writers have not stated

Von Coelln.—"Immersion in water was general until the thirteenth century, when among the Latins it was displaced by sprinkling, but was retained by the Greeks."*

That it was *in cases of sickness only* that immersion was superseded by application of water in some other form, the following authorities will suffice to show.

Salmasius.—"The clinics only, because they were confined to their beds, were baptized in a manner of which they were capable: not in the entire laver, as those who plunge the head under water, but the *whole body* had water poured upon it. Thus Novatus, when sick, received baptism: being *perichythis, besprinkled*, not *baptisthis, baptized*."†

Pamelius.—"Whereas the sick, by reason of their illness, could not be immersed or plunged (which, properly speaking, is to be baptized), they had the saving water poured upon them, or were sprinkled with it. For the same reason, I think, the custom of sprinkling now used first began to be observed by the western church: namely, on account of the tenderness of infants, seeing the baptism of adults was now very seldom practised."‡

Grotius.—"The custom of pouring or sprinkling seems to have prevailed in favor of those that were dangerously ill,

a single fact, or employed a single term, which evinces that they either preferred or *practised immersion in a single case!*" p. 99. "Immersion *is not even the common meaning of the word*" baptize! p. 84. "All impartial judges, *by which I mean all the most profound and mature Greek scholars* who are neither theologians nor sectarians, agree in pronouncing that the term in question imports the application of water by sprinkling!" p. 85.

"This is the man that speaks *ex cathedra* in his book, from the beginning to the end, using such terms as, '*I can assure you, my friends*,' and brands with ignorance and infamy those who maintain the contrary. Such a production is not to be answered by argument."—*Christian Review*, vol. iii. p. 102.

* History of Theological Opinions. Cassell, 1834, vol. i. p. 203.

† Apud Witsium, Œcon. Fœd. l. iv. c. xvi. § 13.

‡ Apud Forbesium, Instruct. Hist. Theo. l. x. c. v. § 57.

and were desirous of giving up themselves to Christ, whom others called *clinics*. See the Epistle of *Cyprian to Magnus*."*

Von Coelln.—"Baptism was by immersion; *only in cases of the sick* was it administered by sprinkling. It was held necessary to salvation, except in cases of martyrdom."†

Rheinwald.—"Baptism was administered by immersion, *only in cases of necessity* by sprinkling."‡

Neander, vol. i. p. 361.—"*Only with the sick* was there an exception," in regard to immersion.

Winer, Lectures on Archæology, in manuscript.—"Affusion was at first applied *only to the sick*, but was gradually introduced for others after the seventh century, and in the thirteenth became the prevailing practice in the west. But the eastern church has retained immersion alone as valid."

Eusebius, Stroth, vol. i. p. 506.—"Baptism was administered *to those on beds of sickness* by sprinkling and pouring; in other cases it was at that time by immersion."

Geiseler, Ch. Hist. Ger. Ed. vol. ii. p. 274.—"*For the sake of the sick*, the rite of sprinkling was *introduced*."

Du Fresne, Lat. Glossary, on the word *Clinici*.—"From the custom of baptizing by pouring or sprinkling *the sick*, who could not be immersed (which is properly baptism), was *introduced* the custom which now prevails in the western church."§

Bp. Burnet.—"The danger of dipping in cold climates may be a very good reason for *changing the form of baptism to sprinkling*."‖

Dr. Towerson.—"The first mention we find of asper-

* Apud Poli Synop. ad. Mat. iii. 6.

† Hist. Theol. Opin. vol. i. p. 459.

‡ Christian Archæology. Berlin, 1830, p. 30.

§ Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 106.

‖ Exposition of XXXIX Art. p. 436.

sion in the baptism of the elder sort was in the case of the *clinici*, or men who received baptism upon their sick beds: and that baptism is represented by St. Cyprian as legitimate upon account of necessity that compelled it, and the presumption there was of God's gracious acceptation thereof because of it. By which means the lawfulness of any other baptism than by immersion will be found to lie in the *necessity* there may sometimes be of another manner of administration of it."*

Sir John Floyer.—"The church of Rome hath drawn short compendiums of both sacraments: in the eucharist they use only the water, and instead of immersion they introduced asperson. . . . I have given now what testimony I could find in our English authors to prove the practice of immersion, from the time the Britons and Saxons were baptized till king James's days, when the people grew peevish with all ancient ceremonies, and, through the love of novelty, and the niceness of parents, and the *pretence of modesty*, they laid aside immersion."†

Dr. R. Wetham.—"The word *baptism* signifies a washing, particularly when it is done by immersion or by dipping or plunging a thing under water, which was formerly the ordinary way of administering the sacrament of baptism. But the church, which cannot change the least article of the Christian faith, is not so tied up in matters of discipline and ceremonies. Not only the catholic church, but also the pretended reformed churches have altered this primitive custom in giving the sacrament of baptism, and now allow of baptism by pouring or sprinkling water on the person baptized. Nay, many of their ministers do it now-a-days by filliping a wet finger and thumb over a child's head, or by

* Of the Sacram. of Baptism, Part III. p. 59, 60.

† Hist. of Cold Bathing, pp. 15, 61.

shaking a wet finger or two over the child, which is hard enough to call a baptizing in any sense."*

Dr. Wall.—"In the case of sickness, weakness, haste, want of quantity of water, or such like extraordinary occasions, baptism by affusion of water on the face was by the ancients counted sufficient baptism. France seems to have been the first country in the world where baptism by affusion was used ordinarily to persons in health, and in the public way of administering it. There had been some synods in some dioceses of France that had spoken of affusion, without mentioning immersion at all, that being the common practice; but for an office or liturgy of any church, this is,† I believe, *the first in the world* that prescribes aspersion absolutely; and for sprinkling, properly called, it seems it was at sixteen hundred and forty-five just then beginning, and used by very few. It must have begun in the disorderly times after forty-one. But then came *The Directory*, which says: 'Baptism is to be administered, not in private places, or privately; but in the place of public worship, and in the face of the congregation,' and so on: and 'not in the places where fonts, in the time of popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed.' So they *reformed* the font into a basin. This learned assembly could not remember, that fonts to baptize in had been always used by the primitive Christians, long before the beginning of popery, and ever since the churches were built; but that sprinkling, for the common use of baptizing, was really introduced (in France first, and then in other popish countries) in time of popery; and that, accordingly, all those countries in which the usurped power of the pope is or has formerly been owned, have *left*

* Annot. on New Test. Matt. iii. 6.—A catholic author, surely an impartial witness. This and several of the preceding quotations are from Booth's Pædobaptism Examined.

† Referring to Calvin's "Form of administering the Sacraments."

off dipping of children in the font: but that all other countries in the world, which had never received his authority, do still use it; and that *basins*, except in case of necessity, were never used by papists, or any other christians whatsoever, *till by themselves*. What has been said of this custom of pouring or sprinkling water in the ordinary use of baptism, is to be understood only in reference to the western parts of Europe, for it is used ordinarily nowhere else.'"*

It is singularly unfortunate for the advocates of pædobaptism, that the very quotations to which they refer us for proof that sprinkling was an approved practice clearly evince that the contrary was the fact.

In the case of Novatian, for instance, "Eusebius informs us, that, when he received baptism by pouring, it was on 'account of his sickness.' It is natural to inquire, why aspersion, if it was of apostolical origin, should be limited to the sick? What objection could there be that any one in health should be so baptized?"†

The case of Cyprian, the father of sprinkling, is greatly relied upon by pædobaptist writers; but this also is only a broken staff that pierces the hand. The writer in the Christian Review (we believe President Sears, to whom our readers are already much indebted for the translations from modern German writers presented in this and previous sections) has treated this point in a manner so condensed, yet clear and satisfactory, that I prefer its insertion to any comments of my own.

"Magnus inquired of Cyprian (see Epist. 76) whether persons thus baptized 'were to be regarded as *legitimate christians*, inasmuch as they were not baptized by *bathing*,

* Hist. of Inf. Bap. Part II. chap. ix.

† Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 106.

but by *affusion*.'* Cyprian is not prepared to give a decisive answer, but expresses his opinion, and says each one must settle this question for himself. His own views are stated thus: 'When there is a *pressing necessity*, with *God's indulgence*, the holy ordinances, though *outwardly abridged*, confer the entire blessing upon those who believe.'† We have given Neander's translation, as the last two words cannot be expressed in English without a paraphrastic rendering. Wall has translated this passage, as he has many others, so as to cover up its true meaning. In the same letter, Cyprian, speaking of those who supposed themselves 'empty and devoid of a blessing because they were not immersed, but merely sprinkled,' says, 'Let them not imagine that they can be rebaptized when they recover.'

"We ask, could all these remarkable circumstances have existed, if the whole church regarded sprinkling as apostolical in its origin, and consequently of equal authority with immersion? Could Magnus have proposed *such* a question? Could Cyprian have given *such* an answer? Why did not the practice and tradition of the church satisfy Magnus? Why did not Cyprian bring it up in reply? Why, in his long argument to show the validity of sprinkling, did he not attempt to prove it from the practice of the primitive church, or from the New Testament, either directly or indirectly? The case *required* such a defence, and Cyprian *felt* it; and, not being able to demonstrate any thing, he left every one to his own views, and yet, wishing to find *some support*, he resorted to the *Old Testament*, and to *the nature of purification*. To these, *these alone*, and nothing else, did he appeal. Besides, if sprinkling was a divine ordinance, what need of any 'urgent necessity,' or (what is still more strange) 'divine indulgence,'

* "Eo quod aqua salutari non *loti* sunt sed *perfusi*."

† "Necessitate cogente, et Deo indulgentiam suam largiente, totam credentibus conferunt divina compendia."

in order to make it pass? What does he mean by that *antithesis* of an *abridged* form and a *total* result? In his time antiquity had not thrown sufficient obscurity around primitive usages, to have it ever enter his thoughts that the apostles *must* have sprinkled, for want of water in some cases, and of time in others. Let it be observed, too, that, even in clinic baptism, an effort was made to *imitate*, as far as possible, the act of immersion. It was not the aspersion of a few drops of water on the face, but pouring water all around the body, as the words *perichythicis* and *purfusus* show.

"Our readers can now perceive some of the reasons which have induced almost the entire body of modern German critics, our teachers and guides in biblical learning and antiquities, to decide, though against their own practice, in our favor. The reasoning adopted in this country by the abettors of sprinkling is ridiculed openly in the German universities."*

In American literary institutions the state of the case is in one respect, at least, far better; such "reasoning," if not *ridiculed*, is in many cases *abandoned*, as the instances of Professor Jewett and others happily prove. The number, both of intelligent private christians and of able and devoted ministers of the gospel, who have, though at great sacrifice of personal feeling, avowed their convictions on this subject, is a pleasing testimony to the power of truth, and I doubt not may be regarded as the first fruits of a universal and glorious harvest.

* Christian Review, vol. iii. pp. 107, 108.

CHAPTER VII.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.—SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

IMPORTANCE OF FIDELITY IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH—DISTINCTION BETWEEN INSPIRATION AND TRADITION.

"FORASMUCH," says Dr. Wall,* "as the commission given by our Saviour to his disciples in the time of his mortal life to baptize in the country of Judea is not at all set down in scripture, only it is said that they baptized a great many; and the enlargement of that commission given them afterwards (Matt. xxviii. 19) to perform the same office among all the heathen nations, is set down in such brief words that there is no particular direction given them what they were to do in reference to the children of those who received the faith; and among all the persons recorded as baptized by the apostles there is no express mention of any infant; nor is there, on the other side, any account of any christian's child whose baptism was put off till he was grown up, or who was baptized at man's age (for all the persons who are mentioned in scripture to have been baptized were the children of heathens, or else of Jews, who did not believe in Christ at that time when those their children were born); and since the proofs drawn by consequences from some places of scripture, for any one side of this question, are not so plain as to hinder the argument drawn from other places

* History of Infant Baptism, vol. i. preface.

for the other side from seeming still considerable, to those that have no help but the history of scripture times for a better understanding of the rules of scripture; it is no wonder that the readers of scripture at this distance from the apostles' time have fallen into contrary sentiments about the meaning of our Saviour's command, and the practice of the apostles in reference to the baptizing of infants."

This important admission, in which all divines of both candor and learning among pædobaptists concur with the learned doctor, renders it necessary for them to place their main reliance upon the early history of the Christian church. Their position is (and it is certainly the most plausible argument that can be brought in favor of infant baptism, would the facts sustain it), that the baptism of infants can be traced back in the writings and practice of eminent ministers and martyrs who lived in the times of the apostles.

I concur with Dr. Wall in his remarks on the necessity of fidelity in quoting the facts of history; and I think that such fidelity should extend to the presentation of every fact bearing upon the point, whether it may appear favorable or adverse. I say "appear," for it is not possible that any fact—which is of course necessarily a truth—can be opposed to the whole truth of which it is a part; for truth is a whole, of which everything true constitutes a harmonious section, however small. It is as unwise as it is dishonest to withhold any fact which appears adverse to our apprehension of truth; because the simple statement of it by an opponent inevitably impairs the public confidence, and deprives argument of its efficiency where that efficiency might be most valuable to the cause of truth.

In allusion to the misrepresentation of facts, Dr. Wall justly observes:—"Such a thing done by mistake, or for want of skill, is bad enough; but, if it be done wilfully, it is hard to think of any thing that is a greater wickedness, for

it goes the way to destroy the common faith of mankind, by which we are apt to rely upon a writer that, how zealous soever he may be of his opinion, he will not forge matters of fact, nor speak wickedly, though it be for God, as Job says (Job. xiii. 7). . . Some other accounts also are very partial, mentioning only that which makes for their side, and leaving out parts of the clauses which they cite.* The inconvenience of this is the worse, because it is a matter which would have a great influence to settle and determine this unlucky controversy, provided that the accounts of the eldest times were given fairly and impartially, and so that the reader may be satisfied with the truth and impartiality of them."

My readers may place the most entire confidence in these pages, that no fact is withheld from them that is necessary to transfer the responsibility of the correctness of their conclusions wholly from myself to them.† I shall place the facts before them, and such explanations as I may deem subservient to the truth; of the justness of the latter they can judge, and form their own conclusion whether they accord with the facts themselves, or not.

By consenting to go into the investigation of the question whether the baptism of babes can be traced to the times of the apostles, I do not mean for a moment to admit, that, if the fact were so, the conclusion is just that it is of apostolic authority. Since it is affirmed by the apostle that "the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work," it is clear

* How many facts of a character unfavorable to their own views Dr. Woods and Dr. Miller have omitted, after having been placed plainly before them by the author they have made so much use of (Dr. Wall), the reader cannot fail to perceive, and "duly appreciate," if he will make the comparison.

† It would have extended this volume beyond the capacity of the generality of Christians to procure, to have inserted all the passages quoted by Dr. Wall; I am not aware, however, of having omitted any of the least consequence to the subject of our investigation.

that the fact of the existence of any practice or doctrine during the lifetime of the apostles is *not* sufficient to give it divine authority, without proof from the inspired writings that such existing practice had their sanction.

Between inspired history and uninspired there is a wide difference, which must never be forgotten. In the former all the facts are true, all the inferences sound, and all the commands binding—authoritative. In uninspired history some of the statements are false (it is often difficult to discover which are true), most of the inferences or doctrines are unsound, and nearly all the premises fallacious. This difference our Lord distinctly recognizes in his address to the Pharisees, when he declares: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. xv. 6). He holds up the Jewish traditions, as not only merely human and unauthoritative, but as frequently, if not usually, making void the commandment of God. As the Christian church became more and more imbued with Judaic ceremonies and principles, it came fully to adopt the Jewish notion of the authority of tradition being equal to that of the written word of God. This matter has been so excellently illustrated by Cruden, an eminent pædobaptist, in his article on Tradition, that I present his own words, yielding them my most unqualified assent.

"Tradition is put for a doctrine first delivered by speech from God, and afterwards writ in his book for the use of the church. This is an object of our faith. (1 Cor. ii. 2; 2 Thess. ii. 5.) It also stands for a human ordinance or ceremony handed down from one to another, as the Jewish oral law. These are good or bad, according as they agree with, or deviate from, the word of God, which is our only rule of faith and practice. The Jews call their traditions the oral law, pretending that God delivered them to Moses by word of mouth on Mount Sinai, at the same time that he gave

them the written law; that this lawgiver taught them to the elders of the people, and committed them to them as a trust which they were to convey down to their successors, and so on. The church of Rome is very near akin to the Jews in this matter. She holds that, besides what we have in the New Testament, the apostles delivered many things to the primitive church only by word of mouth, which have since that time been imparted to succeeding churches, and to the observation of which christians are as much obliged as to the written word. The council of Trent says concerning *traditions*:—'That the truth and discipline of the catholic church are comprehended, both in the sacred books, and in the *traditions* which have been received from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself, or his apostles, and have been preserved and transmitted to us by an uninterrupted chain and succession.' The doctrine of the reformed churches concerning *traditions* is, 'that the holy scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'"*

Upon the protestant principle, therefore, Dr. Wall, and all the most learned and candid writers on that side, must abandon infant baptism. In Dr. W., however, it is no inconsistency, for the church of which he was an able advocate was, in this point, as in many others, semi-papal;† and regarded then, as the Oxford-tract men do now, the writings of the Fathers as a necessary portion of the evidence and authority for christian doctrine and practice. In our closing chapter it will be demonstrated, that one of the great evils of the unhappy perversion of the ordinance of baptism is, that it tends materially to weaken the attachment of those deluded

* Cruden's Concordance, 4to edit. Art. *Tradition*.

† I use this term simply in an historical, not in an offensive sense

by it to the great protestant principle, or rather the principle of the true church, that the Bible, and the Bible ALONE, is sufficient for ALL matters both of faith and practice. Indeed, it is manifest that, whenever paedobaptists engage in a contest with the advocates of popery, they find their position on the subject of baptism one of great embarrassment, to say the least, and giving decided advantage to their opponents.

Although denying the conclusion, therefore, that the practice of the churches in the apostolic age (and still less that of the second century) would be a sufficient warrant for the adoption of infant baptism; yet since, if the facts are so, it will, in some measure at least, excuse those whose minds are imbued with a high reverence for uninspired antiquity for embracing it; and as the truth on this point, be it what it may, cannot fail to be advantageous to the whole question, when properly considered, we enter willingly on the investigation.

SECTION II.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL CHARACTER OF THE EARLY AGES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BEFORE presenting the evidence which the writings and practice of the early ages afford, it is very desirable that the inquirer after truth should have a correct impression, respecting the reliance that is to be placed on the ecclesiastical literature and religious practices of the first four or five centuries of the church.

No misapprehension has been more extensively diffused, more cordially embraced, more tenaciously adhered to, or

more detrimental to the perfect reformation of the church, than the idea that, in the times immediately succeeding those of the apostles (from the first to the fourth centuries) the church exhibited resplendently the purity of divine truth, both in doctrine and practice. It has generally been supposed that the fires of persecution blazed so furiously and so constantly, that the purity of the church in faith and practice was eminently preserved. This idea has been fondly indulged, not only by the advocates of the Romish hierarchy, but equally by protestants in general,* with the exception of a few of the best informed and boldest of the "sect every where spoken against." When Baptist authors have exposed the follies of the early fathers, and the corruptions of christians of the early ages, they have been assailed, as either barbarians in literature, or traitors to christianity.

The wisest of men, however, said, there is "a time for all things;" and the time for the end of this delusion has arrived. Under the providential guidance of the Head of the church, circumstances singular and unexpected have arisen, which have thrown a powerful light on this subject. Several divines, of high ecclesiastical standing and literary character in the very citadel of English episcopacy (the university of Oxford), have for several years past devoted their talents and their influence to impregnate the public mind with the idea, that the true model of the Christian church, both in its doctrines and forms, is to be found in the writings and practices of the Fathers who lived prior to the council of Nice. This would, in effect (whether so insidiously designed or not), lead back the church of England from the position of a reformed church, to that of an ecclesiastical body possessing almost every feature of the papacy, except the acknowledgment of the spiritual domination of the bishop

* Mr. Le Clerk, whom Dr. Wall so much vilifies, and a very few others, have ventured to express fully the truth on this point.

of Rome. This attempt has been made, not only through the pulpit, but through the medium of the press, by the issue of a series of pamphlets entitled "Tracts for the Times:" and the individuals engaged in this effort have acquired the title of the Oxford-tract party. All christendom is interested in this movement, and a very large portion of it regards these efforts with intense interest. The advocates of popery throughout both hemispheres are indulging in pleasing dreams of the re-union of England with the papal see, and are most hopefully engaged in praying for the conversion of the young queen of the British isles. In truth, the controversy which has arisen out of these circumstances deeply affects every ecclesiastical organization extant; and has already brought to light, and placed before the public mind, facts which have a direct bearing on the subject of the present volume. These discussions are but the result of the same process going on through the length and breadth of christendom, *the searching out the foundations of truth.*

This effort on the part of the 'Oxford divines' has called into the field of controversy one, who, from his entire devotion to literary pursuits, his intimate acquaintance with ecclesiastical history, and his high standing as a writer, both in regard to force of style and literary attainments, seems to have been qualified for the mission of bearing the hammer of God, in breaking down those structures of delusion which have enclosed and defended a host of corruptions—infant baptism among the rest. I hesitate not to say, that the volumes* of my respected relative has razed to the very foundation the whole superstructure of Dr. Wall, in his celebrated History of Infant Baptism; and that all who have built upon the same foundation must feel the bitterness of having their fondest and firmest reliance swept away, as a "refuge of lies," by the hand of a powerful writer devotedly

* Ancient Christianity.

attached to infant baptism, as, from personal acquaintance, I know the author of Ancient Christianity to be.

I have deemed it proper, for the sake of many of my readers, to give this sketch of the history of the controversy which has occasioned the publication of a work the most important, in its ecclesiastical bearing, of any which this century has produced. I shall make free use of it in this section, and in a subsequent chapter.

If I present the ideas of the author of Ancient Christianity on the spiritual condition of the church during the early ages in his own words, it is because I consider that such a course will be calculated to obtain the confidence of an important class of my readers, and therefore their assent to truths they will be very reluctant to admit, even when conveyed in the express words of an able and well informed friend.

"The general aspect of the gospel economy," observes the author of Ancient Christianity, "suggests expectations, as to the divine purposes towards mankind at large, which not only have not hitherto been justified by the actual course of human affairs, but which the very explicit predictions of our Lord and of his apostles, had we properly regarded them, should have taught us not to entertain. After listening in the first place to the predictions of the Jewish prophets concerning the reign of the Messiah, and then to the song of the angelic choir announcing the actual birth of the Prince of Peace, if we turn, either to our Lord's public discourses, or to his private conversations with his disciples, a very remarkable contrast presents itself; and, whether or not we may be successful in harmonizing the apparent discrepancy, it presents an alternative strikingly confirmatory of our faith as Christians. For, in the first place, the perfectly unambiguous and often repeated announcements made by Christ to his followers, of persecutions, universal hatred, and cruel deaths, which awaited those who were to promulgate his

doctrine, were the very reverse of what an uninspired founder of a new faith would either himself have admitted, or would have ventured to hold before his early adherents. Then, and in the second place, these same announcements, when compared with the facts which make up the history of the church, stand forward as prophecies so fulfilled to the letter, as to vindicate the divine prescience of Him who uttered them.

"In like manner the well-known predictions contained in the apostolic epistles, and which speak of the corruptions and the apostasies that should arise within the church, are available in this same two-fold manner: first, as evidences of reality and sincerity on the part of the apostles, and as opposed to enthusiasm and guile, which would have dictated things more fair and smooth; and secondly, of a divinely-imparted foreknowledge of the course of events.

"Let it be granted then, that the history of christianity painfully contradicts the bright expectations we might have entertained of what the gospel was to be, and to do. But does it in any particle contradict our Lord's own forewarnings, or the apostles' explicit predictions, concerning the fate and position of its adherents in this world of evil! Assuredly not. . . . . Now this difference should be noted, and it should lead those who hitherto have overlooked it to give the more earnest attention to the details of an inquiry, the intention of which is to discover whether ancient christianity was in fact what we should have rejoiced to find it, or, on the contrary, what the apostolic prophecies would have led us sorrowfully to look for. . . . . If, at any time, or if, in any particular instance, the authority of the ancient church is to be urged upon the modern church, then surely there is a pertinence in turning to the apostolic prophecies of perversions, corruptions, apostasies, quickly to spring up within the sacred enclosure itself, which meet us *at the threshold*,

and seem to bring us under a most solemn obligation to look to it, lest, amid the fervors of an indiscriminate reverence, we seize for imitation *the very things which the apostles foresaw and forewarned the church of as fatal errors.*"*

The manner in which a favorable but incorrect opinion of the sentiments and practices of the primitive church has been fostered in the public mind by ecclesiastical historians, and the importance of its correction to the settlement of ecclesiastical controversies, is thus forcibly stated:—"The point I am now insisting upon I feel to be of great practical importance, in relation to the wide range of controversies which we have in view; for it is my firm conviction that *nothing will be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, until the moral and spiritual condition of the early church has been fully laid open.*"

After speaking of the manner in which ecclesiastical historians have *judiciously (!)* selected the *flowers* of sacred literature, and left the *weeds*, Mr. Taylor very justly observes:—"All this may be well enough, if the mere personal edification of the private christian be in view; but what sort of provision is it which is thus made for acquiring a safe and competent knowledge of the merits and character of the actors in church history? Miserably will any one be deluded who trusts himself to any such culled materials! I think more than a few of the passages I shall presently have occasion to cite, how pertinent soever they may be in regard to the questions at issue, are of a kind that would never have found a place in any selection from the Fathers. Nay, these passages *reveal facts which the compilers of church history have studiously concealed from their readers.*

"If we are anxious to know what the church was at any

* Ancient Christianity and the Doctrines of the Oxford Tracts. By ISAAC TAYLOR, author of Natural History of Enthusiasm, Spiritual Despotism, &c. Amer. Edit. pp. 45, 46.

time, and what its teachers and masters were, then the more judicious (in one sense) such a selection may be, the more effectively will it lead us astray: the choicest collection made on any such principle would be the most mendacious, regarded as TESTIMONY. Such a collection, considered as a material of history, is a splendid vapour, lowering as a glare of seductive light over a swamp. Materials so brought together are just what a body of evidence produced in court would be, if an advocate were allowed to bring forward every thing in which the witnesses are agreed, and to suppress every thing in which they differ. Yet it is precisely by the sifting of the discrepancies in testimony that truth is elicited."[1]

Following this "seductive light," most protestant historians have represented the early ages as a splendid contrast, in point of purity, with those of later date. The researches of Mr. Taylor have led him to a very different conclusion, as will appear from the following extract:—"Our ears have been so much and so long used to the sound (repeated by protestant writers one after the other, and without any distinct reference to facts, and probably without any direct knowledge of them) of the *progressive corruption* of christianity, and of the slow and steady advances of superstition and spiritual tyranny, that we are little prepared to admit a contrary statement, better sustained by evidence, as well as more practically significant in itself—namely, that, although councils, or the papal authority, from age to age followed up, embodied and legalized, certain opinions, usages, and practices, which were already prevalent in an undefined form, it very rarely pushed on far in advance of the feeling and habit of the times; but that, on the contrary, it rather followed in the wake of ancient superstition and contemporary corruption, expressing in bulls, decretals, and canons (which were not seldom of a corrective kind), the will or temper of the ecclesiastical body.

[1] Ancient Christianity, pp. 62, 63.

Or, to state the same general fact as it is seen from another point of view, it will be found true, that, if the opinion and sentiment of the church at different eras be regarded apart from the authorized expressions of the same, there will appear to have been far less of *progression* than we have been taught to suppose; and that, on the contrary, the notions and usages of a later differ extremely little, or not at all, from those of an earlier age: or that, so far as they do differ, the advantage in respect of morality and piety is quite as often on the side of the later as of the earlier ages. Particular points had in view, it might be affirmed, that *popery was a practical form and a corrected expression of ancient Christianity.*

"This is expressly the case in reference to the subject which we have now before us; nor do I at all hesitate to affirm, that pages and pages again may be adduced from writers of the second and third century, which, suppressing names and incidental allusions, an intelligent reader might easily suppose to have been taken from those of the twelfth or thirteenth century. What, then, I am peculiarly desirous to place in a conspicuous position, is the fact, that, instead of a regular and slow development of error, there was a very early expansion of false and pernicious notions in their mature proportions, and these attended by some of their worst fruits. This, then, is the very point and hinge of our argument; and, in making good the weighty allegation, I shall use, not only all requisite diligence of research, but, as I trust, a strict and conscientious impartiality."*

How perfectly applicable to the subject of the present volume—baptism and its corruptions—is the warning voice of this author! "And how well might our vigilance be quickened, when highly respectable Romanist writers are heard affirming (and not without an appeal to good evidence)

* Ancient Christianity, pp. 103, 104.

as much in behalf of the characteristic corruptions of their own church, as *certain protestants* among us are now affirming in behalf of *other ancient practices and opinions, authenticated in precisely the same mode, and to the same extent!*

"'The celibacy of the clergy,' says Alban Butler,* 'is merely an ecclesiastical law, though perfectly conformable to the spirit of the gospel, *and doubtless derived from the apostles.*' We have then to see whether the proof of the antiquity and universality of the *opinions* of which this law was merely a formal expression, be not as good as can be adduced in support of practices and principles *now* urged upon us, *because ancient and 'apostolic.'* "†

The first proof which Mr. Taylor brings respecting the early corruption of the church, is that the doctrine and practice of religious celibacy, with all its attendant vices and abominations, is to be found pervading the whole church under the sanction of the Fathers of the second, third, and following centuries. With respect to these corruptions he makes the following statements :—

"1. That the lapse of eight hundred or a thousand years exhibits very little, if any, progression, in the quality or extravagance of those notions which gave support to the practices of religious celibacy ; and that the attendant abuses of this system were nearly, or quite, as flagrant at the earlier as at the later date.

"2. That, at the very earliest time when we find these notions and practices to have been generally prevalent and accredited, they were no novelties, but had come down from a still earlier era.

"3. That, as these notions and practices are of immemorial antiquity, so did they affect the church universal—

* One of the most talented advocates of the papacy in England.

† Ancient Christianity, p. 105.

eastern, western, and African; and that thus they come fully within the terms of the rule—*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.**

"4. That these opinions and practices, in their most extreme form, received an ample and explicit sanction, and a solemn authentication, from ALL the great writers and doctors of the church during the most prosperous and enlightened age of any preceding the reformation; and that on this head, popery has no peculiar culpability.

"5. That the notions and practices connected with the doctrine of the superlative merit of religious celibacy, were at once the causes and the effects of errors in theology, of perverted moral sentiments, of superstitious usages, of hierarchical usurpations; and that they furnish us with a criterion for estimating the GENERAL VALUE OF ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY; and, in a word, afford reason enough for *regarding*, if not with jealousy, at least *with extreme caution, any attempt to induce the modern church to imitate the ancient church.*"†

The limits of this work will not admit of a detail of the proofs of the truth of these positions; it is sufficient to say that they are all most abundantly sustained in the volume itself, to which the reader is referred. It may be added that a most lamentable amount of proof—disgusting proof—remains unexhibited, if any yet remain sceptical as to the justice of the following conclusions:—"If it were allowed, which I think it must be, that some periods have very far excelled others in piety and wisdom, I should still demur to the allegation that the era immediately following the death of the apostles can claim any such pre-eminence. Nay, I

* Mr. Taylor alludes to the expression of Augustine and other ancient fathers, that what had been believed "*always—everywhere—and by every body*," must be considered as apostolic, and of divine authority.

† Ancient Christianity, pp. 106, 107.

am compelled to say, that the general impression made upon my mind by the actual evidence is altogether of a contrary kind. . . . . There is little risk in affirming that *the first five centuries*, or we might say *the first three*, of the Christian history, comprise a sample of *every form and variety of intellectual or moral aberration* of which human nature is at all susceptible, under the influence of religious excitement. No great ingenuity, therefore, can be needed in matching any modern form of error or extravagance with its like, to be produced from the museum of antique specimens."*

In the chapter relating to the corruptions which are ever found where infant baptism is heard of, I may have occasion to refer to some few of the details contained in Ancient Christianity. The object of the present section was to rectify a prevailing impression respecting the authority attached to the practice of the primitive church, which leads to an incorrect inference from the fact of the comparatively early existence of infant baptism.

SECTION III.

MEANING OF THE TERM "INFANT."

BEFORE investigating the facts of history, it is necessary we should have a correct idea of the meaning of the terms used in treating the subject of our investigation. The use of words varies materially in different countries speaking the same language, and in different eras of the same language. For instance, in America the word "clever" means "good-

* Ibid. p. 57.

natured—well disposed," but in England it conveys the idea of "acute—skilful." So even in different uses at the same period: for instance, in legal language an "infant" is any age under twenty-one years; in the language of the domestic circle it means a babe in its mother's arms.

It is to the Greek and Latin languages that we have to look for the early history of the church. The question is, therefore, what terms were used by writers in those days relating to children and babes, and what is their proper meaning? The terms in the Greek are *pais*, *paidion*, *brephos*, *brephyllion*; in Latin, *puer*, *puericulus*, *parvulus*, *infans*, *infantulus*. It is maintained that *pais* and *paidion* in the Greek, and all the Latin terms, are *general*, not confined to *babes*, but used for children of several years old; and that, to ascertain that a babe is referred to in any passage, the circumstances alluded to must be depended on, and not the word itself.

With respect to the terms *pais* and *paidion*, as they are generally admitted to be extended in point of age, an instance or two shall suffice.

1. That of a Greek inscription on a sepulchral monument which was taken out of the churchyard of St. Agnes, at Rome.*

"This tomb contains Menophilus, *an infant* (*paida*) to be lamented with many tears: whom, adorned with the beauty of the three graces, cruel fate snatched away from his unfortunate parents. Here you behold him, who lived eight years and five months."†

2. The learned Montfaucon has exhibited a sepulchral

* Montfaucon, Ital. p. 321.

† ΜΗΝΟΦΙΛΟΝ ΤΑΦΟC ΟΥΤΟC ΕΚΕΙ ΠΟΛΥΠΕΝΘΕΛ
ΠΑΙΔΑ ΟΝ ΧΑΡΙΤωΝ ΤΡΙCCωΝ ΠΑΝΕΠΗΡΑΤΟΝ
ΕΙΔΟC ΕΧΟΝΤΑ ΑΙΝΟΤΟΚΩΝ ΕωΝ ΦΟΝΟC ΗΡ-
ΠΑCΕ ΝΟΝ ΚΑΘΟΡΑΤΕ ΟΚΤΩ ΜΟΝΙΟC ΕΤΕCΙΝ
ΒΕΒΙωΚΟΤΑ ΜΕCΙΤΕ ΠΕΝΤΕ.

monument of the Greeks, which describes different stages of infancy. "The first figure is that of a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in the lap of the parent who is sitting in a car. The second shows the parent in the same manner, and the child sitting upon the knee, as if grown. The third represents him on the ground, playing with a kind of go-cart with two wheels. The fourth describes him at play with some birds, as having arrived at a further period. What would a history of the baptism of an infant mean, when infancy includes persons so different, and the term covers more than twenty years of life?"*

In the Greek writers of the early ages, princes and their companions are called *paides*, their literary tutor, *paidagogos*, their gymnastic teacher, *paidotribes*. As, therefore a pædogogue was the instructor of Greek youth, so a pædobaptist was a baptizer of them—quite a different affair from that of new-born babes.

In the Latin the term *infantulus* is a diminutive of *infans*, as in the Greek *brephyllion* is of *brephos*. It will be only necessary to show that even this term is extended to several years of age. Robinson has quoted from "the learned and indefatigable Muratori" (who spent a great part of his life in searching into the ecclesiastical antiquities of the middle ages), three instances of "last wills and testaments;" that of "Adald, the little infant of Lucca;" that of "the little infant, Count Gaiffer;" and that of "the little infant, Hubert;" all wills regularly made by the "little infants," and duly attested by competent witnesses. In each case the Latin word used is "*infantulus*."†

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. p. 139.

† Robinson's History, p. 136. The reader will generally find in Robinson a store of authorities more than enough to prove his points. This volume is designed to be a work in which "children" in literature "may walk;" Mr. Robinson's is one in which "elephants" in ecclesiastical antiquity may "swim."

After the division of the Roman empire into eastern and western, the law in both terminated infancy at the age of twenty-five. When the northern nations overran the empire, they fixed the termination of minority at various ages, from eighteen to twenty-five. There were laws for the maintenance of infants till twelve years old; for the nullity of marriage of infants, except in certain cases; the alienation of the property of an infant; and the punishment of an infant for killing a man.

"Ecclesiastical laws respecting infants, that is, minors, are extremely numerous, and, among other things, concern the catechizing of them, and in express terms enjoin the instruction of them previous to baptism, and the administration of baptism by immersion.*

"Father Martene, one of the most indefatigable collectors of monastical antiquities, hath comprised in a narrow compass, from a variety of authentic monuments of Italy, Germany, England and France, the laws by which infant-monks were governed. The code was called the discipline of *infants*, or the discipline of the *boys*, the *barnes*, the *catechislings:* in the choir, in the cloister, in the refectory or the eating-room, in the kitchen and scullery, in the dormitory or sleeping-room, in the infirmary, in the lavatory, laundry or washing-room, and every where else. Each article is adjusted with the utmost precision, as lessons, hymns, and processions, the shaving of their crowns, the correction with the rod, and some other articles not necessary to be mentioned. The whole proves, beyond all contradiction, that the term infancy signified nonage in general.

* "Qualiter catechizantur *infantes*. . . . Interim autem dum lectiones legantur, presbyteri catechizant *infantes* et præparent ad baptizandum. . . . Dicet hanc orationem ad catechizandos *infantes*. . . . Deinde pontifex baptizet unum de ipsis *infantibus*. . . . Ibi baptizentur *parvuli*," &c.—*Ordo Roman. De Sabbato Sancto.*

"The same language prevails in all modern laws. Hence the late learned Judge Blackstone says, 'Infancy is nonage, which is a defect of the understanding. *Infants* under the age of discretion ought not to be punished by any criminal prosecution whatever.'"*

An instance of the kind of infants baptized in the times of Ambrose occurs in his Life, written by Paulinus. He relates a great many different occasions on which St. Ambrose's ghost, or shape, appeared to several persons after he was dead; and, among the rest, how, he having departed this life on Easter eve, his body was carried and laid in the great church.

"And there it was that night which we spend in watching at Easter (this was the night before Easter-day, on which, in primitive times, the whole body of the people did always sit up all night in the church at prayers); and a great many of *the infants that were then baptized* saw him as they came back from the font: some of them saying, there he sits in the bishop's chair; others of them showed him to their parents, pointing with their hands that he was going there up the steps; but the parents looking could not see him, because they had not their eyes cleansed (or enlightened)."†

The words employed respecting the baptism of infants, therefore, will not, of themselves, sustain the burden cast upon them; the individuals might have been either twenty days, twenty months, or twenty years old. This view of the use of the terms "infant" and "little infant" is necessary to avoid many difficulties in ancient history, for infants are said to have nominated kings and bishops, erected churches, composed hymns, and suffered martyrdom.‡ It will not, therefore, be deemed unreasonable by any candid

* Robinson's History of Baptism, p. 141.

† Paulinus in Vita Ambrosii. Wall's Hist. vol. ii. p. 276.

‡ Robinson's History of Baptism, p. 157.

mind, that something more should be found than the use of the term *infans*, or even *infantulus*, when relating to baptism, to establish it as a fact that a *babe* was baptized.

SECTION IV.

BAPTISM IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE, OR FIRST CENTURY.

THE five Fathers, who flourished during this century, were Barnabas, Hermas, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp. There are no writings ascribed to these venerable men that can be safely relied upon as the production of their pens, except, perhaps, the Epistle of Clement. Indeed, such was the state both of literature and morals, in the fourth and subsequent centuries, that the favorite occupation of the monks of those days seems to have been, first to write the most ridiculous nonsense by way of indicating their literary taste; and then fraudulently to attach to it the name of some eminent Father of the first or second century, by way of proving the high state of their moral sensibility. That the reader may be convinced that this severe censure is not without good authority, I extract Mosheim's opinion of the writings attributed to Barnabas and Hermas.

"The epistle of Barnabas was the production of some Jew, who most probably lived in this century, and whose mean abilities and superstitious attachment to Jewish fables show, notwithstanding the uprightness of his intentions, that he must have been a very different person from the true Barnabas, who was Paul's companion.

"The work which is entitled 'The Shepherd of Hermas,' because the angel who bears the principal part in it is represented in the form and habit of a shepherd, was com-

posed in the second century by Hermas, who was brother of Pius, bishop of Rome.

"This whimsical and visionary writer has taken the liberty to invent several dialogues, or conversations, between God and the angels, in order to insinuate in a more easy and agreeable manner the principles which he thought useful and salutary into the minds of his readers. But, indeed, the discourse which he put into the mouths of those celestial beings is more insipid and senseless than what we commonly hear among the meanest of the multitude."*

One passage only has been referred to by pedobaptists, as in any way favoring the baptism of babes before A. D. 100. After what has been said, indeed, it is almost needless to mention it; as the book is believed by no good authority to have been written by that Father. It is this: "Baptism is necessary to all." As Dr. Doddridge justly observes, "This will only prove that baptism is necessary to the proper subjects of it; but cannot determine that infants are so." Dr. Woods, very properly, does not avail himself of this passage, considering probably, with Dr. Doddridge, that it proves nothing, or being aware that the writings were not from the pen of Hermas. Professor Pond, however, makes much of it, and says not a word respecting the fact that Hermas never wrote it. Dr. Woods *begins* with Justin Martyr, who flourished more than a hundred years after Christ. Dr. Miller claims no passage till Tertullian.

This is all the evidence which any of the advocates of infant baptism claim from the first century. Individuals who have been led to believe that the practice can clearly be traced to the times of the apostles will, I know, be filled with astonishment and incredulity. If any of them can find additional facts, for one I shall willingly acknowledge myself their debtor. I delight in facts, especially those of ancient history.

* Mosheim, vol. i. p. 32.

Before closing this section, I will give the reader the statements of Mosheim, and others, respecting the practice of the ordinance in this century.

"Whoever acknowledged Christ as the Savior of mankind, and made a solemn profession of his confidence in him, was immediately baptized and received into the church. But, in process of time, when the church began to flourish and its members to increase, it was thought prudent and necessary to divide Christians into two orders, distinguished by the names of *believers* and *catechumens*. The former were those who had been solemnly admitted into the church by baptism, and in consequence thereof were instructed in all the mysteries of religion, and were authorized to vote in the ecclesiastical assemblies.

"The latter were such as had not yet been dedicated to God and Christ by baptism, and were therefore admitted, neither to the public prayers, nor to the holy communion, nor to the ecclesiastical assemblies. The sacrament of baptism was administered in this century without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by the *immersion of the whole body* in the baptismal font. At first it was usual for all, who labored in the propagation of the gospel, to be present at that solemn ceremony; and it was customary that the converts should be baptized and received into the church by those under whose ministry they had received the Christian doctrine. But this custom was soon changed. When the Christian churches were well established, and governed by a system of fixed laws, the right of baptizing the Christian converts was vested in the bishop alone."*

To this attestation from so impartial a witness, I will add the opinions of the modern German critics and ecclesiastical historians, which will be found decisive against

* Mosheim, vol. i. pp. 29—36.

the claim of infant baptism to be regarded as an *apostolic* practice.

NEANDER affirms that "it cannot possibly be proved that infant baptism was practised in the apostolic age. The late introduction, the opposition it met with still in the second century,* rather speak against an apostolical origin."

Prof. HAHN's Theology, p. 556.—"According to its true, original design, it can be given only to *adults*, who are capable of true knowledge, repentance, and faith. Neither in the Scriptures, nor *during the first hundred and fifty years*, is a sure example of *infant baptism* to be found: *and we must concede that the numerous opposers of it cannot be contradicted on gospel ground.* Few men stand so high in public estimation, for piety, sense, and learning, as Prof. Hahn, of Breslau.

Prof. LANGE, in his recent work on Infant Baptism, p. 101, observes:—"All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament, fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the *apostolic age*, and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament."

BAUMGARTEN-CRUSIUS, Hist. of Theology, p. 1208.—"Infant baptism can be supported, neither by a distinct apostolical tradition, nor apostolical practice."

OLSHAUSEN, vol. ii. p. 454.—"By the introduction of infant baptism, *which was certainly not apostolical*, the relative position of baptism, after the ebullition of spiritual gifts had passed away, was changed: the outward act returned back to the rank of John's baptism, and necessarily revived confirmation, as supplying an internal deficiency." And, vol. i. p. 158:—"In infant baptism, *which the church at a later period for wise reasons introduced*, the sacred

* Dr. Neander alludes probably to the "opposition" of Tertullian. It will clearly appear, however, in the next section, that his remarks were against the baptism of *children*, not *babes*.

rite returned back, as it were, to the inferior rank of John's baptism." An ingenious mode of concession!

MYERS, in his commentary on Acts xvi. 15, sustains the same position. "Baptism without faith never appears [in the Scripture], and is contrary to Matt. xxviii. 19 [the commission]. The early and continued opposition to infant baptism would have been inexplicable, if it had been an undoubted apostolical institution."*

GESENIUS, being informed in conversation that the Baptists in America reject infant baptism, and baptize only adults on profession of faith, replied, 'That is perfectly right; that is according to the Bible.'"†

One more attestation from an historian (one of those whom Dr. Miller would term "neither a theologian nor sectarian"), the celebrated MENZELI, "One of these last [abuses] was *infant baptism*, a departure from the original form of the sacrament which had existed for centuries in the church, for which, indeed, very pertinent reasons can be offered, *but it is nevertheless a* DEPARTURE."‡

Although, however, there is no evidence in favor of the existence of infant baptism in the first century, there is decisive evidence against it. It is clear that Justin Martyr, who lived one hundred and forty years after the Christian era, knew nothing of it. The German writer, SEMLER,§ says, "From Justin Martyr's description of baptism (Second Apol. p. 93), we learn, that it was administered *only to adults*. He says, 'We were (corporeally) born without our will (*kat' anangken*)—but we are not to remain chil-

* Myers's Critical Commentary on the New Testament. Göttingen, 1835, vol. iii. p. 215.

† Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 201.

‡ K. H. Menzeli's Modern History of the Germans and the Reformation. Breslau, 1826, vol. i. p. 123.

§ Baumgarten's Rel. Controversies, vol. ii. p. 64.

dren of *necessity and ignorance* (as to our birth), but *in baptism* are to have *choice, knowledge, &c. This we learned from the apostles.*'"

"We should be obliged to accuse Dr. Woods of unfairness," justly observes the learned reviewer of Burgess on Baptism, "in keeping back this decisive testimony against himself, were it not that he might be acquitted on the ground of not knowing that there was such a passage in the works of Justin Martyr. *Here we have, from the earliest christian Father, a positive testimony against infant baptism;* an assertion that the baptism which had been handed down from the apostles was an ordinance in which one was to exercise *choice* and *knowledge*. How much stronger is this early testimony than the later Gnostic tradition of Origen, and the still later *belief* of the polemic Augustine, in regard to such a tradition!"*

SECTION V.

BAPTISM IN THE SECOND CENTURY.

THIRTEEN individuals who lived during the second century are dignified with the title of Fathers: of these, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, and Tertullian, the first of the Latin Fathers, are regarded as the most eminent, at least as to their writings.

It will be granted, surely, that infant baptism must be found in this century as a general practice, or that the plea

* Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 205.

of attaching it even to apostolic *tradition* must be abandoned. I shall proceed to quote all the passages that are relied on by the advocates of infant baptism.

In presenting these extracts from the writings of the Fathers, in this and the following sections, most of them will be in the translation of Dr. Wall, and of course will not be objected to by those whose cause he so strenuously and ably advocated.*

The first quotation is from Justin's First Apology, addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius.

"I will now declare unto you also, after what manner we, being made new by Christ, have dedicated ourselves to God; lest, if I should leave out that, I might seem to deal unfairly in some part of my apology. They who are persuaded and do believe that those things which are taught by us are true, and do promise to live according to them, are directed first to pray, and ask of God with fasting the forgiveness of their former sins; and we also pray and fast together with them. Then we bring them to some place where there is water, and they are regenerated by the same way of regeneration by which we were regenerated; for they are washed with water

* It gives me pleasure to speak of this author as he deserves. The plan and execution of Dr. Wall's work is, in the general, such as is calculated to do justice to the subject, and to inspire confidence in his readers; although he has, through the powerful influence of educational bias, misapprehended some passages, and erred in his conclusions from the premises he has brought forward. His inserting the passages he quotes in the original, entire and ungarbled, so that all who understand the Latin and Greek may judge of the fidelity of his translations, is worthy of all praise; and will render his volumes a valuable treasury of facts on this subject, when more ephemeral productions will have for ever sunk into oblivion. I may add, that, to an unprejudiced mind, accustomed to investigate history and to form correct conclusions, the perusal of Dr. Wall's volumes will terminate in a full conviction that believers are the only subjects, and that immersion is the only mode of baptism, even without the assistance of Dr. Gale's admirable reply.

in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit."*

This passage, indeed, appears to indicate that the identification of baptism and regeneration was gaining ground in the time of Justin; but it is certainly entirely in favor of believers' baptism.

There is another passage in Justin Martyr that Dr. Wall and some other pædobaptists deem to refer to the baptism of infants. "Several persons among us of sixty or seventy years old, and of both sexes, who were disciples to Christ in their childhood, do continue uncorrupted." Pædobaptists contend that "disciples" means "baptized," and "infants" "babes." On this passage Dr. Howell justly remarks:—

"The use made of this passage from Justin shows how some men will overstrain and wrest the Fathers, to make them speak in favor of any sentiment their prejudices may have led them to adopt. With regard to the quotation before us, we have to remark, first, that the word used by Justin for *discipling*, is *emathetusato*, the very same used by Christ in the commission, when he directs his apostles to go and 'teach,' or disciple, all nations. The persons, therefore, of both sexes, '*now sixty or seventy years old*,' were said by Justin to have been 'taught' in the manner commanded by the Lord Jesus at an early age; but not a word is said of their baptism. To suppose that this *teaching* was *baptizing* them, is unsupported, gratuitous, and absurd."† The term employed to designate these persons is by no means limited to infancy, but frequently applied, both in the Scriptures and in the writings of the Fathers, to young people, as in the case of Eutyches and others. This passage, therefore, so far from affording any aid to the pædobaptist, affords evidence of a contrary character.

* Justini Apologia Prima (vulgo Secunda) ad Antoninum Pium.

† Howell's Sermons on Baptism, p. 52. See also note, chap. ii. sec. iv. p. 86.

Dr. Doddridge is of the same opinion, for he observes—"but this may only refer to their having been early instructed in the Christian religion."* The Doctor adds—"There is indeed a remarkable passage in the Questions and Answers of the Orthodox (Quest. lvi. p. 424), which most evidently mentions infant baptism in as express terms as possible, inquiring into the different states of those children who were and who were not baptized at the general resurrection; but, though these questions are ascribed to Justin Martyr, and are no doubt of considerable antiquity, there is no evidence that he was the author of them, nor can their age be so exactly ascertained as, on this occasion, and on many others, one would desire."†

The quotation most relied upon as a reference to infant baptism in the second century, is that from Irenæus.

"Therefore, as he [Christ] was a master, he had also the age of a master. Not disdaining nor going in a way above human nature, nor breaking in his own person the law which he had made for mankind; but sanctifying every several age by the likeness that it has to himself; for he came to save all persons by himself—all, I mean, who by him are *regenerated* unto God, infants, and little ones, and children, and youths, and elder persons: therefore he went through the several ages; for infants being made an infant, sanctifying infants; to little ones he was made a little one, sanctifying that age; and also giving an example of godliness, justice, and dutifulness, to youths he was a youth, &c."‡

The application of this passage to infant baptism depends on proving that, in the writings of Irenæus, the term "regenerate" means "baptize." Dr. Doddridge says on this quotation—"We have only a Latin translation of this work; and some critics have supposed this passage spurious; or,

* Miscell. Works, Lecture cciv. p. 494. † Id. Ib.

‡ Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 39.

allowing it to be genuine, it will not be granted that *to be regenerate* always in his writings signifies to be *baptized*."*

"Every thing here turns," says President Sears, "on the meaning of *renascuntur*. If it means *they were regenerated*, then it has nothing to do with our subject; if it means *they were baptized*, then it proves the existence of infant-baptism in the time of Irenæus. This question cannot be settled, as many have thought, by an appeal to *later* writers; for the idea of baptismal regeneration was of gradual growth, and in every successive period, from the apostles to the middle ages, words were changed in their meaning to correspond with the change of ideas. The scholastic writers attach more to the word than Chrysostom and Gregory, and these more than Irenæus and Justin Martyr."

After a most elaborate investigation of passages in the writings of Irenæus, and the presentation of quotations enough to satisfy the most sceptical that Irenæus did not employ the word *renascuntur* regenerated in the sense of *baptize*, Mr. Sears observes—"In the light of this investigation of Irenæus's general views of 'regeneration,' let us come to the interpretation of the passage which is said to support infant baptism.

"1. The phrase 'regenerated through Christ unto God,' if it mean the general 'recovery of man through Christ's incarnation and redemption,' has numerous parallels in the writings of Irenæus; if it mean 'baptized through Christ unto God,' it has *no* parallel—*absolutely none.*

"2. The phrase 'baptism through Christ unto God,' is an incongruous idea, nowhere to be found in the Scriptures, in the writings of Irenæus, or in any other Father or writer, ancient or modern.

"3. 'Regeneration,' standing alone without any such word

* Dodd. Miscel. Works, p. 493.

as 'baptism' or 'bath' prefixed, and governing it in the genitive, *never means baptism in Irenæus.*

"4. That Christ sanctified infants by becoming an infant himself has several parallels in Irenæus. 'He became an infant to aid our weak apprehension'—'He became an infant with us (*sunenepiazen*) on this account,' IV. 38, 1 and 2. 'He went into Egypt, sanctifying the infants that were there.' It would be absurd to suppose that the infant Jesus *baptized* the Egyptian infants.

"5. That, by passing through the several stages of human life from infancy to old age, he sanctified human nature in these various ages by his own incarnation and example, is an idea often repeated by Irenæus, and by modern writers too, as Sartorius. But, if this be limited to baptism, or to the baptized, it will contradict what he elsewhere says.

"6. The general character of his redemption and regeneration, as expressed in this passage, according to our interpretation, is a favorite idea with our author; a similar sentiment in regard to *baptism* is not to be found in his writings.

"7. The connexion of the latter part of the sentence with the former, as explaining or amplifying the idea, is weakened if not destroyed by the other interpretation."

That Irenæus had no reference to baptism in this passage is sustained by many of the most celebrated German critics.

Baumgarten-Crusius, p. 1209, says—"The celebrated passage in Irenæus, II. 22, 4, is not to be applied to infant baptism; for the phrase, 'renasci per eum (i. e. Christum) in Deum,' evidently means the participation of all in his divine and holy nature, in which he became a substitute for all."

Winer, in his Lectures, says—"Tertullian is the first that mentions it [infant baptism]. Irenæus does not mention it, as has been supposed."

We have already quoted STARCK, as saying, "Neither Justin Martyr nor Irenæus say respecting infant baptism what has been attributed to them."

ROSSLER, in his Library of the Christian Fathers, vol. i. p. 11, observes—"All the arguments put together do not prove that 'renasci in Deum' (in this passage of Irenæus) means to be baptized."

MUNSCHER, in his Larger History of Theology, vol. ii. p. 334, denies the validity of this evidence for infant baptism.

"VON COELLN, vol. i. p. 469, says—"All the earlier traces of infant baptism are very uncertain. Tertullian is *the first who mentions it*, and he censures it."* Irenæus, it will be recollected, was an earlier writer than Tertullian.

I presume every candid reader will now be satisfied that Irenæus had no reference whatever to infant baptism.

It may naturally be asked, are there not some other passages which will help out and strengthen the conjecture raised from this passage of Irenæus? I present the reader with the only one. It is from the writings of Clement of Alexandria, the great school of ecclesiastical fancifulness. "And if any one be by trade a fisherman, he will do well to think of an apostle and the children taken out of the water." Surely this is weakness undertaking to strengthen weakness! The term used may as well apply to youths from twelve to twenty years, as to babes. But, in fact, the reference is spiritual, not physical. Christians are frequently called children, both in the Scriptures and in the writings of the Fathers.† Paul says, "I speak as to my children." John,

* Christian Review, p. 213.

† Clement particularly uses the term in this sense. In fact, the work in which the above extract is found, is entitled Paidagogos, or the Child's Instructor. Neander remarks that Clement plays upon the word "child" with reference to his title. This passage is generally given up now, and is not claimed by Dr. Woods.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." Yea, more, they are often called "little children." Christ says to his twelve apostles, "Little children, yet a little while I am with you." Paul calls the Galatians "My little children." John says, "My little children, I write unto you;" again, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them," that is, the "spirit of antichrist" which was then "in the world;" and a third time, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." These expressions the apostles learned from the Great Teacher, when he said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children." It is these "little children," "infantuli" in a spiritual sense, that I love to baptize. In past days some Baptist ministers have erred, in delaying baptism to this sort of "little children." For one, I am willing to follow the example of the apostles, and to baptize them so soon as I am satisfied they are "new born babes in Christ;" though my Presbyterian brethren are not pleased at such rashness. O that they knew the delight of giving up their traditions, and leading into the water such "little children" as these, in imitation of their Lord!

Well, reader, this is actually all that appears about the baptism of babes up to the beginning of the third century. I ask, is this the evidence on which you will hold that infant baptism is an apostolic practice, or even a practice of the primitive church?

There is, however, another passage which has been presumed, though evidently without investigation, to allude to infant baptism as existing, though not as generally adopted, either late in the second or early in the third century, because it opposes that practice. It is from Tertullian's Treatise on Baptism.

"That baptism ought not to be administered rashly the

administrators of it know. 'Give to him that asketh, every one hath a right;' as if it were a matter of alms. Yea, rather say, Give not that which is holy unto dogs, cast not your pearls before swine, lay hands suddenly on no man, be not a partaker of other men's sins. If Philip baptized the eunuch on the spot, let us recollect it was done under the immediate direction of the Lord. The Spirit commanded Philip to go that way: the eunuch was not idle when he found him, nor did he immediately desire to be baptized; but, having been at the temple to worship God, he was attending to the holy Scriptures. There was a propriety in what he was about when God sent his apostle to him, and the Spirit gave Philip a second order to join himself to the chariot. The eunuch was a believer of Scripture; the instruction given by Philip was seasonable; he one preached and the other perceived the Lord Jesus, and believed on him; water was at hand, and the apostle having finished the affair was caught away. But Paul, you say, was baptized instantly. True: because Judas, in whose house he was, instantly knew he was a vessel of mercy. The condescension of God may confer his favors as he pleases; but our wishes may mislead ourselves and others. It is therefore most expedient to defer baptism, and to regulate the administration of it according to the condition, the disposition, and the age of the person to be baptized; and especially in the case of little ones. What necessity is there to expose sponsors to danger? Death may incapacitate them for fulfilling their engagements, or bad disposition may defeat all their endeavors. Indeed, the Lord saith, Forbid them not to come unto me; and let them come while they are growing up, let them come and learn, and let them be instructed when they come, and, when they understand Christianity, let them profess themselves Christians. Why should that innocent age hasten to the remission of sins? People act more cautiously in

secular affairs, they do not commit the care of divine things to such as are not entrusted with temporal things. They just know how to ask for salvation, that you may seem to give to him that asketh. It is for a reason equally important that unmarried women, both virgins and widows, are kept waiting, either till they marry, or are confirmed in a habit of chaste single life. Such as understand the importance of baptism are more afraid of presumption than procrastination, and faith alone secures salvation."*

This passage occurs in a work of six folio pages, addressed, not to the church at Carthage, where Tertullian resided, but to Quintilla, who seems to have been the patroness of a small sect in the town of Pepuza, in Phrygia.† Nothing can be

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 174–176.

† An account of this sect from Robinson, while interesting, will exhibit a specimen of his too satirical style.

"Who was this Quintilla? She was a lady of fortune, who lived at Pepuza, a town in Phrygia. Either she, or Priscilla, or both, formed a Christian society where they lived. One of the members of this church was named Montanus, a poor obscure man, of no learning, but, like all the rest of the church, of severe morals. He taught in the church. His air was captivating to the lower sort of people, and his example and instructions led multitudes into this mode of Christianity, so that the church multiplied and spread itself all over Asia, Africa, and a part of Europe.

"In this church the women preached, and were called prophetesses. They believed both the Testaments, Old and New, and had a deal to say from both in defence of themselves. Miriam, the sister of Moses, prophesied. The daughters of Philip prophesied. The wise virgins took their lamps, and went out to meet Jesus. They used to say there was neither male nor female in Christ Jesus: and, therefore, women were both elders and bishops in their congregations, and taught and baptized. They disowned priesthood, despised literature, and never flinched from persecution. Some called them Phrygians, others Priscillianists and Quintillianists; some named them Montanists, others called them Pepuzians; and, if any body inquired of them what they called themselves, they answered, We are Artotyrites, that is, bread and cheese eaters. Monsters, exclaim the serious catholics, do ye offer bread and cheese in sacrifice to your gods?

more evident from the passage itself, than that the error Tertullian is combating is that of baptizing young children, not babes. He says, respecting them, "They just know how to ask for salvation." And again, in reply to the argument that Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," he observes, "Let them come, and let them be instructed when they come: and when they understand Christianity, let them profess themselves Christians." It is evident, therefore, that the children referred to were capable of "coming," and, when come, of being "instructed."

The term "sponsors" has probably had much to do with connecting the baptism of babes with this passage of Tertullian: but it is certain from ecclesiastical history, that sponsors were first introduced to answer for catechumens, and, together with every other form used in the baptism of the adult, were ultimately, though not till the fourth century, transferred to infants. What Tertullian with great propriety urges is, that, while these children, who were probably taken from benevolence from parents who were pagans, should receive Christian instruction, it would be very improper for any one to become answerable for their spiritual conduct by having them baptized at an age when they could only just ask for baptism, and when, therefore, they could not be presumed to have attained, either sufficient understanding of

"Epiphanius, who wrote a history of what he did not know as well as of what he did, gave those good ladies a place in his list of heretics, and though he says he did not know their history, yet he pretends to tell even their dreams, which probably they never told, except jocularly in their dressing-rooms, where writers of folios seldom come, especially such as Epiphanius, who wrote slander in folio. How they contrived to be bishops themselves, and yet to despise priesthood in the other sex, is hard to say. Probably a Pepuzian bishop was a teacher; a very different person from Bishop Epiphanius, who mistook himself for governor of the Isle of Cyprus."—*Robinson's Hist. Bapt.* vol. ii. pp. 170, 171.

Christianity, or development of moral character.* Certain it is, at any rate, that what Tertullian says of these children is utterly irreconcileable with their being babes.

I am aware that most of the German critics, while they consider this passage in the very opposite point of view to American pædobaptists (that it proves infant baptism *not* to have been an admitted practice at the time of Tertullian's writings), receive it as evidence that infant baptism was then coming in. After the most mature reflection, I apprehend the idea of Robinson to be the correct one, and that in which all critics, on further investigation, will agree—that it was the baptism of young children, and not of babes, that Tertullian alludes to; a clear evidence that the baptism of babes was not then practised, because, children having been baptized when a few days old, the question of baptizing them "when they are just able to ask for it" cannot arise.

The claim for the *bare existence* of infant baptism in the second century, rests wholly on the passage in Irenæus, with that in Tertullian, who lived at its very close. *Both these passages have been proved to contain no allusion to the baptism of babes.* Such baptism is not found in the second century; it is not even referred to, as the German critics suppose, for the purpose of being condemned.

The unprejudiced inquirer after truth will now be compelled to admit, that there is no *evidence* of the existence of infant baptism in the second, any more than in the first century; and faith can rest only on evidence. The state in which history is left is part of the providential arrangement of him who is "Head over all things to the church;" and,

* In the second century Christians began to be divided into *believers*, or such as were baptized, and *catechumens*, who were *receiving* instruction to qualify them for baptism. To answer for these persons, sponsors, or god-fathers, were first instituted; and were afterwards in the fourth century extended to infants.—*Edinburgh Encyclopædia*. Art. *Baptism*.

had it been the design of Him in whose power it is to overrule all things, to strengthen or rather to call forth our faith in infant baptism by the practice of the church in the first and second centuries, he would undoubtedly have taken care that satisfactory evidence should have been at hand. With respect to the observance of the first day of the week instead of the seventh, which is only occasionally alluded to in the New Testament, the most satisfactory evidence exists; and, had the practice of infant baptism been general (which it must have been had it been an apostolic command), it is *impossible* it should not have been distinctly noticed. It is not my place, however, to prove a negative. It is sufficient that no evidence exists of this having been the practice in the first two centuries of the Christian church; and *this lack of early evidence* cannot be compensated by any traditions of a later date; it is fatal to the last hold of infant baptism, the unfounded assumption that it can be traced back in the history of the church to apostolic times.

If infant baptism is not found to exist as a practice during the first century, or apostolic age, and only faint and doubtful traces can be discerned by the ablest pædobaptist authors in the latter portions of the second century, while others do not admit its appearance before the third, every candid mind must admit that its claim to be an apostolic practice utterly fails. I have already expressed my own judgement on that point; but, to complete the satisfaction of my readers, I shall insert the deliberately expressed sentiments of a number of the most learned pædobaptists of the English Episcopal, Lutheran, and Reformed churches.

I commence with Dr. BARLOW, Bishop of Lincoln. In a letter to Mr. Tombes, he observes—"I believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for pædobaptism, nor any just evidence for it for about two hundred years after Christ. Sure I am, that in the primitive

times they were *catechumeni*, then *illuminati*, or *baptizati*. The truth is, I do believe pædobaptism, how or by whom I know not, came into the world in the second century, and in the third or fourth began to be practised, though not generally."

GROTIUS, in his Annotations on Matt. xix. 14, states to this effect:—"It does not appear that infant baptism did universally obtain in the primitive church, but was more frequent in Africa than any where else. In the councils of the ancients one shall find no earlier mention of pædobaptism than in the Council of Carthage. In Tertullian's time it appears there was nothing defined concerning the age in which they were to be baptized that were consecrated by their parents to Christian discipline, because he dissuades by so many reasons the baptizing of infants: and Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of those who die without baptism, mentions among the rest those who were not baptized by reason of infancy; and he himself, though a bishop's son, and educated a long time under the care of his father, was not baptized till he became a youth,* as is related in his life."

The learned BISHOP TAYLOR concurs with Grotius. "In the first age," says he, "they did, or they did not, according as they pleased; for there is no pretence of tradition that the church in all ages did baptize all the infants of Christian parents. It is no more certain that they did do it always, than that they did in the first age. St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and St. Austin, were born of Christian parents; and yet not baptized until the full age of a man, or more.

"That it was the custom to do so in some churches, and at some times, is without all question; but that there is a tradition from the apostles so to do relies but on two witnesses, Origen and Austin; and, the latter having received

* He was baptized at the age of thirty-one.

it from the former, it wholly relies on one single testimony; which is *but a pitiful argument to prove a tradition apostolical*. He is the first that spoke it; but Tertullian, who was before him, seems to speak against it: which he would not have done if it had been a tradition apostolical."

Rigaltius, who was very conversant with the works of the Fathers, gives the same account. "From the age of the apostles," says he, "to the time of Tertullian, the matter continued *in ambiguo*, doubtful or various, and there were some who, on occasion of our Lord's saying 'Suffer little children to come unto me,' though he gave no order to baptize them, did baptize new-born infants; and, as if they were transacting some secular bargain with God Almighty, brought sponsors and bondsmen to be bound for them, that when they grew up they should not depart from the Christian faith; which custom Tertullian did not like."

Monsieur Daille was of the same opinion. He says—"In ancient times they often deferred the baptizing both of infants and of other people, as appears by the history of the emperors Constantine the Great, Constantius, Theodosius, Valentinian, and Gratian, out of St. Ambrose; and also by the orations and homilies of Gregory Nazianzen, and of St. Basil on this subject. And some of the Fathers, too, have been of opinion that it should be deferred."

Walafridus Strabo, who lived about the year seven hundred and fifty, is very express on this point. "It is to be noted," says he, "that, in the primitive times, the grace of baptism was wont to be given to those only who were arrived to that maturity of body and mind that they could know and understand what were the benefits of baptism, what was to be confessed and believed; and, in a word, what was to be observed of those that are regenerated in Christ."

Ludovicus Vives, in his notes on Augustin de Civitate Dei, says,—"No person was formerly brought to the sacred

baptistery till he was of adult age, and both understood the meaning of that mystical water, and requested once and again to be washed in it."

SUICERUS says the same thing, but is more positive as to the time. "In the two first ages," says he, "no person was baptized till he was instructed in the faith, and tinctured with the doctrine of Christ, and could testify his own faith; because of those words of Christ, 'He that believeth and is baptized;' *therefore believing was first.*"

CURCELLEUS also fixes the time of bringing in infant baptism. "Pædobaptism," says he, "was not known in the world the two first ages after Christ. In the third and fourth it was approved of by a few. At length, in the fifth and following ages, it began to obtain in divers places. And therefore we observe this rite, indeed, as *an ancient custom*, but *not* as an apostolical tradition. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ; and there appears not the least footstep of it in the first two centuries," says this learned author.*

MOSHEIM, in his description of the rites of the church in the second century, does not venture to affirm that infant baptism was yet introduced. "The sacrament of baptism," he says, "was administered publicly twice every year, at the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, or Whitsuntide, either by the bishop, or presbyters in consequence of his authorization and appointment. The persons to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, and confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the devil and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the express command of our Lord. After baptism they received the sign of the cross, were anointed, and, by prayers, were solemnly commended to the

* Crosby's Hist. Eng. Bapt. pref. pp. 46, 49–55.

mercy of God, and dedicated to his service; in consequence of which they received milk and honey, which concluded the ceremony. Adult persons were prepared for baptism by abstinence, prayer, and other pious exercises. It was to answer for *them* that sponsors, or god-fathers, were first instituted, though they were *afterwards admitted also in the baptism of infants.*"*

The celebrated German critic, BRETSCHNEIDER, in his recent work,† observes—"All the earlier traces of infant baptism are *very doubtful;* on the contrary, Tertullian *is the first who refers to it*, and he censures it. Origen and Cyprian, on the contrary, defend it. In the fourth century its validity was generally acknowledged, although the church Fathers often found it necessary to warn against the delay of baptism. Even Pelagius did not dare to call the correctness of it in question. Augustine pointed out the removal of original sin and the sins of the children as its definite object; and through his representations was its universal diffusion promoted."

WINER'S Manuscript Lectures.—"Originally only *adults* were baptized; but, at the *end of the second century* in Africa, and in the third century generally, infant baptism was introduced; and in the fourth century it was theologically maintained by Augustine."

MATTHIES, one of the latest writers on baptism, p. 187, says—"In *the first two centuries* no documents are found which clearly show the existence of infant baptism at that time."

According to RHEINWALD, p. 313, the "*first traces* of infant baptism are found in the western church *after the middle of the second century*, and it was the subject of controversy in proconsular Africa towards the end of this century. Though its necessity was asserted in Africa and

* Mosheim, vol. i. p. 58. † Theology (1838), vol. i. p. 469.

Egypt, in the beginning of the third century, it was, even to the end of the fourth century, by no means universally observed—least of all in the eastern church. Notwithstanding the recommendation of it by the Fathers, *it never became a general ecclesiastical institution till the age of Augustine.*"

"It is to be regretted," observes President Sears, satirically, referring to the strange assertions of Dr. Woods in the face of these quotations, "that Neander, and a few other Germans, such as Winer, Schleiermacher, Gieseler, Baumgarten-Crusius, Hahn, Olshausen, De Wette, Münscher, &c., &c., had not more extensive means of investigation, and were not more deeply versed in the study of the Fathers! Had they seen Dr. Woods on Infant Baptism, they would have learned 'that we have evidence as abundant, and specific, and certain, as history affords of almost any fact, that infant baptism universally prevailed from the days of the apostles through four centuries. During this period no one denied it; and no one argued against it.' 'The testimony of the early Christian writers in favor of infant baptism as the uniform practice of the church, is worthy of entire credit, and, as the circumstances were, affords a conclusive argument that it was a divine institution.'* We cannot reconcile these assertions with the great respect we entertain for Dr. Woods, except upon the supposition that he has not read the early Christian writers for himself, but has merely adopted certain isolated passages quoted by others, without going to the original authorities and studying the connexion. It is very unsafe for the historical critic to arrive at his conclusions without first carefully investigating the facts."†

Admitting then Dr. Wall's position, "that there is no doubt the apostles knew what was to be done in this case,

* Dr. Wood's Lectures, p. 190.

† Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 202.

and consequently *did* the Christian church in their time *did* as we should now;" I would call upon my brethren to do as we *know* the apostles and primitive churches in their day, and long after, did—to immerse believers, and those only. Only what we *know* can be the guide of our conduct; and I boldly affirm that no man living *knows*, whatever he may *suppose*, that any other than believers were baptized, either by the apostles, or for one hundred years after the death of the last of those inspired missionaries.

Here I might well rest the case; but, as it has been asserted by some that it is at least highly probable that infant baptism descended from the apostles, because its introduction into the Christian church cannot be traced out, miserable as this apology is, even that shall be submitted to the test of historical investigation.

SECTION VI.

THIRD CENTURY—INFANT BAPTISM DISCOVERED IN AFRICA.

In this century the state of the church became rapidly corrupt; its bishops were ambitious and tyrannical, and many of its members luxurious and vicious. This statement is fully sustained by all Protestant, and many Catholic writers on ecclesiastical history.* It is in the most corrupt

* The testimony of the learned Mosheim will be deemed sufficient:—

"The face of things began now to change in the Christian church. The ancient method of ecclesiastical government seemed in general still to subsist, while, at the same time, by imperceptible steps, it varied from the primitive rule, and degenerated towards the form of a

portion of the church (the African) in this corrupted age that infant baptism is first discovered.

Two only of the seven Fathers of this century are referred to as affording evidence of the existence of infant baptism—Origen and Cyprian.

The former is one of the most celebrated writers of ancient times. His works were voluminous, containing much that is good mixed with the wildest fancies, borrowed mainly from the visionary theories of the Greek philosophers. His writings have been so much altered, especially the Latin translations of them, by Ruffinus and Jerome, that it is very difficult to distinguish those sentiments which are his from those which belong to his translators. Dr. Doddridge says, respecting the passages relating to the baptism of infants, "they are chiefly to be found in those translations of his Greek works which were done by Rufinus and Jerome, who

religious monarchy. For the bishops aspired to higher degrees of power and authority than they had formerly possessed; and not only violated the rights of the people, but also made gradual encroachments upon the privileges of the presbyters. And that they might cover these usurpations with an air of justice, and an appearance of reason, they published new doctrines concerning the nature of the church and of the episcopal dignity, which, however, were in general so obscured, that they themselves seem to have understood as little as those to whom they were delivered. One of the principal authors of this change in the government of the church was Cyprian, who pleaded for the power of the bishops with more zeal and vehemence than had ever been hitherto employed in that cause, though not with an unshaken constancy and perseverance; for, in difficult and perilous times, necessity sometimes obliged him to yield, and to submit several things to the judgment and authority of the church.

"This change in the form of ecclesiastical government was soon followed by a train of vices, which dishonored the character and authority of those to whom the administration of the church was committed. For, though several yet continued to exhibit to the world illustrious examples of primitive piety and Christian virtue, yet many were sunk in luxury and voluptuousness, puffed up with vanity, arrogance, and ambition, possessed with a spirit of contention and discord,

made some very bold alterations according to their own judgment and taste; but this is not applicable to all the passages brought from him."*

Dr. Wall thinks the following passages may be relied on as genuine, while his opponent, Dr. Gale, contends that they are spurious.† For my own part I feel unconcerned: the truth can well afford to have Origen as an advocate for this error. I now quote them.

"Having occasion given in this place, I will mention a thing which causes frequent inquiries among the brethren. Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? Or when have they sinned? Or how can any reason of the laver in their case hold good, but according to the sense that we mentioned even now? 'None is free from pollution, though his life be but the length of one day upon the earth;' and it is for that reason, because by the sacra-

and addicted to many other vices that cast an undeserved reproach upon the holy religion of which they were the unworthy professors and ministers. This is testified in such an ample manner by the repeated complaints of many of the most respectable writers of this age, that truth will not permit us to spread the veil which we should otherwise be desirous to cast over such enormities among an order so sacred. The bishops assumed in many places a princely authority, particularly those who had the greatest number of churches under their inspection, and who presided over the most opulent assemblies. They appropriated to their evangelical function the splendid ensigns of temporal majesty. A throne, surrounded with ministers, exalted above his equals the servant of the meek and humble Jesus; and his sumptuous garments dazzled the eyes and minds of the multitude into an ignorant veneration for his arrogated authority. The example of the bishops was ambitiously imitated by the presbyters, who, neglecting the sacred duties of their station, abandoned themselves to the indolence and delicacy of an effeminate and luxurious life. The deacons, beholding the presbyters deserting thus their functions, boldly usurped their rights and privileges; and the effects of this contempt and division were spread through every rank of the sacred order."—*Mosheim*, vol. i. pp. 72, 73.

* Doddridge, Miscel. Works, p. 944.

† See Gale's Reply to Wall, pp. 418-423.

ment of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized."*

"For this also it was that the church had *from the apostles a tradition* [or order]† to give baptism even to infants; for they to whom divine mysteries were committed knew that there is in all persons the natural pollution of sin, which must be done away by water and the Spirit; by reason of which the body itself is also called *the body of sin*."‡

It will be observed that Origen (if indeed these are his words) bases infant baptism on the necessity of washing away the "pollution of our birth," or original sin, and on its efficacy to that end. In the second passage he states this to be the reason of the apostles leaving the church such a "tradition." Neander observes respecting Origen—"His words in that age cannot have much weight; for whatever was regarded as important was alleged to be from the apostles. Besides, many walls of partition intervened between this age and that of the apostles, to intercept the view."§ Origen, then, gives up scriptural authority for infant baptism; and I see not how those who deny Origen's opinion, that the reason of this *tradition* was the necessity of baptism to cleanse from Adam's sin, can suffer themselves to rely upon his opinion (for it is no more) that the apostles delivered such a tradition. The fact urged that he had christian ancestors who might probably have been contemporary with the apostles, whatever influence it has favorable to one of his opinions, has an equally favorable effect upon the other.

Cyprian, the other celebrated writer of this century, un-

* Origen. Homil. in Luc. 14.

† This is one of the several instances in which Dr. Wall suffered his anxious desire to make out a case for infant baptism to mislead him. He ought to have been aware that the words he inserts in brackets give a stronger meaning than the original justifies.

‡ Comment. in Epist. ad Rom. lib. 5.

§ Church History, vol. i. part 2, p. 367.

doubtedly affirms the existence of the practice of infant baptism. Doubts have existed on the minds of some respecting the authenticity of his letter to Fidus; but I know of no just ground for entertaining them. It is to be borne in mind also, that the sentiments expressed in this letter were concurred in by the council of Carthage, consisting of sixty or seventy African bishops. Various matters were proposed to the council for its decision.* The question which Fidus, a

* "One was this. There was a bishop named Rogatian, who had in his church a contumelious deacon, against whom Rogatian complained that he treated him, his bishop, with contumacy; that is, disobedience. Nothing else was laid to his charge, except an insinuation that he was a younger man than his bishop. Myles of Carthage took the opinions of his colleagues, as learned in the law as himself, and wrote for answer to Rogatian: 'That the council was extremely shocked at the contents of his letter, which informed them that his deacon had treated him with contumacy; that he himself had power to vindicate the dignity of his office by excommunicating such a refractory man, though in his great humility he had applied to his brother bishops in council. God himself had decided the case in the seventeenth of Deuteronomy, by saying, "The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken to the priest, even that man shall die. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously." This was the sin of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram. It was for this God said to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me." If Paul said, "Let no man despise thy youth;" how much rather may we say, Let no man despise thine old age. This is the spring of all heresies and schisms. Deacons ought to recollect that the Lord Jesus himself elected apostles, that is, bishops; but, as for deacons, they were instituted after the death of Jesus only by apostles. This deacon, therefore, ought to repent and give his bishop full satisfaction, and if not, he ought to be excommunicated. If others encourage and imitate him, they ought to be treated in the same manner. Farewell brother.'

"The second cause tried before the court was this. A christian man, it should seem a bishop, named Gemmus Victor, had departed this life, and, by will duly executed, had appointed his brother, Gemmus Faustinus, a preaching elder, executor of his will, and guardian of his children. This was a heinous crime in the eyes of the Fathers. For a man to presume to employ the clergy in secular affairs, when God had appointed them, as the tribe of Levi, to exercise themselves in divine things, and had commanded all other men to cultivate the earth, and

country bishop, submitted, was not whether infant baptism was proper, but whether, in any case, infants might be baptized before they were eight days old; as the ceremony of kissing was inseparable from baptism in those days, and he deemed a babe under eight days ceremonially unclean. The letter of Fidus on this very important point has unfortunately not been preserved, but these particulars are gathered from Cyprian's reply, of which the following is an extract:—

"And whereas you say, that 'an infant in the first days after his birth is unclean, so that any of us abhors to kiss it;' we think not this either to be any reason to hinder the giving to it the heavenly grace; for it is written, *to the clean all things are clean:* nor ought any of us to abhor that which God has vouchsafed to make. Though an infant come fresh from the womb, no one ought to abhor to kiss at the giving of the grace, and the owning of the peace (or brotherhood), when, as in kissing the infant, every one of us ought, out of devotion, to think of the fresh handy-work of God; for we do in some sense kiss his hands in the person newly formed and but now born, when we embrace that which is of his making."*

to follow businesses, and to support the Lord's priests with the tenth of their labors, was a great crime, and a dangerous precedent. It was ordered that the dead man's name should be struck out of the diptychs, and that such as in future should imitate his example, and employ the clergy to do any secular business, should be excommunicated."—*Robinson's Hist. Bapt.* vol. ii. pp. 195, 196.

My readers will recollect that, as strengthening the argument for connecting baptism with circumcision, Dr. Woods states that a similar connexion exists between the levitical priesthood and the christian ministry. In the epistle of Cyprian, we fully perceive the connexion of infant baptism and priestly arrogance; they were never separated in the ancient churches, and it is very difficult, if not impossible, wholly to separate them in modern churches. Pædobaptist deacons ought either to "fear, and do no more presumptuously," with respect to their bishops or pastors, or else to give up Cyprian's infant baptism, as well as to decline submitting to his priestly domination.

* Cypriani Epist. 64, (Pamelii Edit. 59,) ad Fidum.

To any one acquainted with the general history of this portion of the world, it will appear highly probable that the descent of baptism from youth to children, which had been opposed by Tertullian some half century before, and then from children to babes, was accelerated by a natural desire, on the part of the priesthood, to place their numerous illicit progeny* within the pale of the church: perhaps also, a benevolent effort to rescue others from the condition to which, as pagans, they were exposed—that of being sold as slaves—had a cooperative tendency to produce this result. It is certain that, as error germinates with a rapidity proportioned to the ignorance which surrounds it, these African churches constituted the locality where the first appearance of infant baptism might be expected.

Let it be duly considered, that, during this century, this practice is not heard of either in the Roman, Greek, or heretical churches, as they are termed; it is confined solely to Africa. This circumstance led the celebrated Grotius to believe "that infant baptism was not universally held to be necessary; because, in the councils, one finds no earlier mention of it than in the council of Carthage."

There is a passage from Cyprian which proves that infant communion also existed at this period. I shall extract it in a subsequent chapter. This circumstance accounts for Dr. Doddridge's declining the testimony of Cyprian. He thus cuts the matter short:—"Cyprian is allowed by all to speak expressly of infant baptism as generally used in the church; but it is justly answered, that he speaks as expressly of infant communion in the eucharist; and that, consequently, the divine original of the *latter* may as well be argued from him, as that of the *former*; yet almost all pædobaptists allow that to be an innovation."†

* See Ancient Christianity, by Isaac Taylor, p. 121.

† Doddridge's Miscell. Works, p. 494.

The testimony of the history of the third century on infant baptism, then, is this:—that it is found sanctioned by an African council, and in company with the doctrine of washing away Adam's sin, and with the practice of infant communion; and that it cannot, during even the third century, be found any where else.

But this is not all: its non-existence in other parts can be proved. If the quotation be deemed by any somewhat transgressing the grounds of propriety, I must remind the reader that it is the introduction of infant baptism that renders such allusions necessary, in pursuance of an historical investigation of the truth; and assure him that (although the production of such quotations would for ever forbid the charge of indecency in the practice of immersion being again even hinted at by the advocates of sprinkling) I shall refrain from quoting much that would tend to show the absurdities which speedily grew out of infant baptism, and are inevitably associated with the doctrines which gave it birth, out of a regard to the feelings of my readers. The quotation is from the acts of Neo Cæsarea, held at the close of this century.

"A woman with child may be baptized when she pleases; for the mother in this matter communicates nothing to the child; because, in the profession, every one's own (*or peculiar*) resolution is declared, (or, because every one's resolution at the profession is declared to be peculiar to himself)."*

Grotius produces two commentators on this canon, Balsamon and Zonaras, who interpret it as if the council had understood infant baptism to be unlawful. Grotius's words are these: "How much soever the commentators draw it to another sense, it is plain that the doubt concerning the baptizing women great with child was for that reason, because the child might seem to be baptized together with its mother; and a child was not wont to be baptized, *but upon its own*

* Concilii Neo. Cæsariensis, canon 6.

will and profession: and so Bellarmine explains it—'That cannot be enlightened or baptized, because it has not yet come into the light, nor *has any choice of the divine baptism:*' and, also, Zonaras—'The child that is now in the womb has no need of baptism; then *when it shall be able to choose,*' &c."*

SECTION VII.

BAPTISM IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.

It, as ecclesiastical historians agree, a material change for the worst had taken place in the christian church in the third century, before the fires of pagan persecution had finally ceased, we may form some idea how rapidly such corrupt tendencies, both in doctrine and practice, must have advanced, when the imperial power, and the influence of office and wealth, were arrayed on the side of the church. As the prophet foretold, "many clave to them with flatteries." If the church decreased in piety, however, it did not in talents. The fourth century was the age of eloquence in the churches. Of the remaining Fathers, all but one lived in this century, or very early in the fifth. Eusebius, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Lactantius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzen, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Chrysostom, all belong to this period.

It is very remarkable that no satisfactory reference to the existence of infant baptism as a general practice (with the African exception) is found until the writings of Jerome and Augustine. On the contrary, the evidence from the extracts given by Dr. Wall bears strongly in the opposite direction.

* Annot. in Matt. xix. 14.

Of the writings of this age Mr. Taylor uses language as forcible as it is just. "There is no degradation of the intellect, no bondage of the moral sentiments, no fatal substitution of forms for realities—there is no ineffable drivelling belonging to the middle age monkery, that may not be matched to the full in the monkery of the bright times of Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine. I here put the question aloud to any opponent—'What is it that you precisely mean by the corruptions of popery, in respect to the monastic system?' Or, in other words, 'Can you make it appear to the satisfaction of thinking men, that this same system had become more frivolous, and therefore, in a religious sense, more pernicious in the twelfth century, than it was at the opening of the fourth?'"*

The first public allusion in the Greek church to the subject of the baptism of infants is in the fortieth oration of Gregory Nazianzen,† Bishop of Constantinople, so late as A. D. 381. It is as follows: "But, say some, what is your opinion of infants, who are not capable of judging either of the grace of baptism, or of the damage sustained by the want of it; shall we baptize them too? By all means, *if there be any apparent danger*. For it were better they were sanctified without their knowing it, than that they should die without being sealed and initiated. As for *others*, I give my opinion, that, when they are three years of age, or thereabouts (for then they are able to hear and answer some of the

* Ancient Christianity, p. 149.

† Gregory Nazianzen, the son of the bishop Nazianzen, in Cappadocia, was born A.D. 328, and studied at Cæsarea, Alexandria, and Athens. After having displayed great theological and other talents, he was raised by Theodosius, in 380, to the archiepiscopal throne of Constantinople. He, however, soon resigned his high office, and retired to Nazianzen, where he died in 389. His works, which form two folio volumes, consist of sermons, poems, and letters, and are pure in their style, and highly eloquent.—*Encyc. Rel. Knowl.* p. 583.

mystical words, and, although they do not fully understand, they may receive impressions, they may be sanctified, both soul and body, by the great mystery of initiation."

"Gregory," says Mr. Robinson, "the metropolitan of all Greece, the oracle of the Catholic world, gave this as *his opinion*, which is a clear indication that the baptism of children was a new affair, unsettled by law, human or divine; and this in the pulpit of the cathedral at Constantinople, in the close of the fourth century. Indeed, it was impossible for him to say more, for, as the whole oration proves, he was preaching to an audience many of whom were unbaptized. The Emperor Theodosius, who probably was present, had been baptized very lately, in the thirty-fourth or thirty-fifth year of his age. Gregory himself was thirty when he was baptized, and Nectarius, his immediate successor, was not baptized till after he had been elected to succeed him in the archi-episcopal throne; and yet the emperor had been trained up from his childhood in the Nicene faith, and Gregory was born while his father was a bishop. The opinion given by this prelate is that new-born babes ought not to be baptized, except in case of danger of *death*. In such a case, he says, they might be sanctified without knowing it.

"Further, the orator gave it as his opinion, that children not in apparent danger of death should be baptized at three years of age, more or less, because they might receive some impressions, and because they could pronounce some of the baptismal words. This was introducing two very considerable alterations. During the first catechumen state, it was not a few slight impressions, such as ceremonies make on the minds of children, but it was a rational knowledge and an inward love of virtue that entitled a Catechumen to become a Competent, or a candidate for baptism. The first catechetical lecture of Cyril is wholly on this subject, and

an excellent address it is. Thus he speaks:—'Ye disciples of the New Testament, partakers of the mysteries of Christ, if any of you affect disguise in the sight of God he deceives himself, and discovers his ignorance of the Almighty. Beware, O man, of hypocrisy, for fear of him who trieth *the heart* and *reins*.' The other alteration regards the baptismal words. Cyril observes, there was much for a catechumen to say at baptism. Each was to renounce Satan, and each was to utter, at first the whole creed, and latterly an abridgement of it, as—'I believe in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and in one baptism of repentance.' The renunciation of Satan was long, and ran thus: 'Satan, I renounce thee: thee, thou wicked and most cruel tyrant: I no longer fear thy power, for Christ was made a partaker of my flesh and blood, that by his sufferings and death he might destroy thy power, subdue death, and free me from perpetual bondage. I renounce thee, thou cunning and subtle serpent: I renounce thee, thou impostor, who, under a form of friendship, employest thyself in all iniquity: who didst beguile our first parents to sin: thee, Satan, I renounce, thou minister and manager of all unrighteousness: I renounce all thy works, and all thy pomp, and all thy worship.' The plan of Gregory turned both the renunciation and the creed into interrogatories to be addressed by the priests to the children, and there remained only two words for the children to utter as answers: the one to the renunciation, the other to the creed, and both easy to a Greek infant of three years of age. The priest asked, 'Dost thou renounce Satan, that wicked and cruel tyrant?' and so on: the child answered, *Apotassomai*, that is, 'I do renounce.' The priest asked, 'Dost thou believe in God the Father?' and so on: the child answered, *Pisteuo*, that is, 'I do believe.'"*

The gradual introduction of infant baptism now begins to

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 249-252.

become very apparent. That at the time Gregory delivered his oration, however, infant baptism was by no means general, will appear from an oration of Basil,* Bishop of Cæsarea, delivered a few years previously. He says:—

"Do you demur and loiter and put off? When you have been from a child catechised in the word, are you not yet acquainted with the truth? Having been always learning it, are you not yet come to the knowledge of it? A seeker all your life long! A considerer till you are old! When will you be made a Christian? When shall we see you become one of us? Last year you were for staying till this year; and now you have a mind to stay till next. Take heed that, by promising yourself a longer life, you do not quite miss of your hope. You don't know what change to-morrow may bring."†

"When I first copied out this passage," says Dr. Wall, "to put it into this collection, I thought it to be the strongest evidence against the general practice of infant baptism in those times of any that is to be found in all antiquity (though it has not, I think, been taken notice of by any of the anti-pædobaptists); for it plainly supposes that a considerable part of St. Basil's auditory at this time were such as had

* Basil, called the Great, to distinguish him from other Greek patriarchs of the same name, was born in 329, at Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, and, after having studied at Athens, he for a while taught rhetoric and practised at the bar. In 370 he was made Bishop of Cæsarea, where he died in 379. He is the most distinguished ecclesiastic among the Grecian patriarchs. His efforts for the regulation of clerical discipline, of the divine service, and of the standing of the clergy; the number of his sermons; the success of his mild treatment of the Arians; and, above all, his endeavors for the promotion of a monastic life, for which he prepared vows and rules, observed by himself, and still remaining in force, prove the extent of his influence. The Greek church honors him as one of its most illustrious patron saints.—*Encyc. Rel. Knowl.* p. 197.

† St. Basil, Oratio exhort. ad Baptism.

been from their childhood instructed in the Christian religion, and consequently, in all probability, born of Christian parents, and not yet baptized."

This appeal of Basil to his congregation was delivered about A. D. 375. In seventy years from the accession of Constantine, the Roman empire, at least such principal parts of it as the diocese of Cæsarea, had long since been freed from paganism.* Notwithstanding, therefore, what Dr. Wall urges to the contrary, the persons Basil was addressing must, almost all of them, have been the children of Christian parents, and yet they remained unbaptized. What proof more can be needed than that infant baptism was very far from general at the close of the fourth century?

In support of the position that Basil did not deem infant baptism an apostolical tradition, it is important to notice that he enumerates a list of *traditions*, among which are "the sign of the cross, the consecration of the baptismal water, the *three* immersions, the renunciation of the devil, the unction," &c.; but he makes no mention of sprinkling, or of infants.†

A passage from Ambrose is quoted in Dr. Wall's Defence, written a few years later; but it is questionable whether the phrase "infants" refers to babes or youth. Indeed, from the clause "reformed back again from their *wickedness*," the latter would appear most consistent.‡ The passage is this:—"But, perhaps, this may seem to be fulfilled in our time and in the apostles' time; for that returning of the river

* Important as the bearing of the Oration of Basil is on the question at issue, elucidating and confirming that of Gregory, Dr. Woods does not even suggest it in his Lectures to his students.

† Basil de Spir. Sanct. cap. xxvii. tom. ii. p. 351.

‡ Dr. Woods, however, will have it that Ambrose plainly signifies that infants (by which word the doctor means *babes*) were baptized in the times of the apostles. The phrase "a wicked state" agrees better, however, with a child than an innocent babe.

waters back and towards the spring-head, which was caused by Elias when the river was divided, as the Scripture says 'Jordan was driven back', signified the sacrament of the laver of salvation, which was afterwards to be instituted; by which those infants are reformed back again from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature."*

Other passages from Ambrose, Augustine, and Chrysostom, relating to the doctrines from which they urge and sustain infant baptism, will be given in a subsequent chapter. There is no question, as matter of historical fact, that Augustine and Chrysostom's testimony is understood to bring in infant baptism as a universal practice, and that, to a considerable extent, they succeeded. But the most remarkable declaration on the subject is found in Augustine's controversy with the Donatists, a sect who rejected the introduction of infant baptism:—"And if any one do seek for divine authority in this matter, though that which the whole church practises, and which has not been instituted by councils, but was ever in use, is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing delivered by authority of the apostles, yet, we may, besides, take a true estimate how much the sacrament of baptism does avail infants, by the circumcision which God's former people received."†

On this bold statement Mr. Robinson justly remarks:—"With what possible decency could Augustine dare to affirm this? Some, who have no very favorable opinion of either the sincerity or modesty of the man, are so shocked at this affirmation, that they suspect his works have been interpolated, and think he could not say so. Yes! he is allowed by those, who have most studied his books, to have constantly affirmed this. Was he himself then baptized in his infancy? Was Ambrose, who baptized him, baptized in

* Ambrosii Comment. lib. 1. in Luc. c. 1.

† Augustinus de Baptismo contra Donatist. lib. iv. c. 15.

infancy? Was his own natural son baptized when he was an infant? Was his father Patricius baptized when an infant? Had he, who pretended he had been a Manichean, never heard that they did not baptize infants? Had all other heretics escaped his notice? Had he forgot himself, when he taxed the Pelagians with denying infant baptism? And when he complained in another book of people who opposed it? If it were an established universal custom, for whose use was the law made to compel it?"*

The law referred to was contained in a decision of an African council, held at Mela, in Numidia, A. D. 416, at which Augustine presided. The council consisted at first of about sixty bishops; but, not to detain so many from their charges, three from each province were selected to remain. This council of fifteen issued twenty-seven declarations, or ecclesiastical laws, eight of which were directed against Pelagianism. That against Baptists was in the following terms:—"Also it is the pleasure of the bishops to order, that *whoever denieth that infants newly born of their mothers are to be baptized*, or saith that baptism is administered for the remission of their own sins, but not on account of original sin derived from Adam, and to be expiated by the laver of regeneration, *be accursed*."†

It is certainly rather discreditable to infant baptism, that the first law ever passed on the subject (so far as history affords evidence) should be accompanied by a *curse* on those who dissent from the opinion expressed. Although Augustine was a profligate youth, and a bloody persecutor in his riper years, I am not prepared to denounce him as hypocritical in his professions of conversion. While I do not, therefore, accord with the severity of Mr. Robinson's expressions, yet, loving liberty, and hating ecclesiastical tyranny in all

* Robinson's Hist. Bapt. p. 218. † Ibid. 217.

forms, times, and places. I can sympathize with him in the indignation he expresses when quoting this law.

"An honest indignation arises at the sound of such tyranny; and, if a man were driven to the necessity of choosing one saint of two candidates, it would not be Augustine, it would be Saint Balaam, the son of Bosor, who indeed loved the wages of unrighteousness, as many other saints have done, but who, with all his madness, had respect enough for the Deity to say, *How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?* To curse citizens for sayings! To curse Christians for not saying more of a subject than Scripture says! To be cursed by the very men who are kept only for the sake of blessing mankind with good examples of virtue! Unfeeling African slaves to mount themselves on a tribunal, and denounce curses on the whole world! Who can help being offended at the sight? Who can be grieved to see the Vandals come forward and subvert all the labors of Augustine's life?"*

The words of Pelagius, in his controversy with Augustine, "that he had never heard of any one, even the most impious heretic, who denied this," have been relied upon with great stress by the advocates of pedobaptism: but they "do not seem," observes Dr. Sears, "to refer to the *rite of infant baptism*, though he had been speaking of it, but to *the necessity of baptism in order to enter the kingdom of heaven*. The language itself will bear either construction. But the facts in the case make it *impossible* that he should say what the other interpretation would imply. Let us see if he could have made the assertion that he 'never heard of any one who denied infant baptism.' Tertullian certainly had denied it. Neander shows from Origen's 14th Hom. on Luke, that 'in *his* time similar difficulties with those

* Robinson's History of Baptism, pp. 217, 218.

urged by Tertullian *were brought against infant baptism.*'*

"Julian, who belonged to the party of Pelagius, says in one of his works, 'I have replied to those who may think baptism is not necessary for children.'†

"Augustine observes, 'Men are *accustomed to ask* of what benefit is the sacrament of baptism to infants, since, for the most part, after having received it, they die before knowing any thing of it?'‡ The council of Carthage, at which Augustine presided, as we have already seen, decreed, 'whosoever shall deny that new-born infants are to be baptized, let him be accursed.' Chrysostom complained that most persons neglected to baptize their children.§ Jerome (in Epist. ad Lactam.) speaks of those 'who refused to give baptism to their children.' In this state of things, how would it be possible for Pelagius to make such an assertion as has been put into his mouth?"‖

Two passages from Chrysostom will suffice. Speaking of circumcision, he observes that God is much more favorable to Christians, in the baptism which he has appointed instead of it. In remarking upon this, he says, "But *our circumcision*, that is, *the grace of baptism*, gives cure without pain. And it has no determinate time, as circumcision had; but it is proper that this circumcision without hands should be received by one in *the beginning of life*, or in the middle of it, or in old age."

"There is another passage, in a homily of Chrysostom, respecting those who are baptized, which is cited by Julian and by Augustine, and which contains a very explicit recog-

* Ch. Hist. vol. i. part 2, p. 369.
† Wigger's Hist. of Pelagianism, p. 69.
‡ De Lib. Arbit. 3, 23.
§ See his Life by Neander, p. 81.
‖ Christian Review, vol. iii. p. 216.

nition of infant baptism. He says, 'Some think that the heavenly grace of baptism consists only in the forgiveness of sins; but I have reckoned up ten advantages of it. For this cause *we baptize infants also, though they are not defiled with sin*:' or, as Augustine has quoted it from the Greek of Chrysostom, 'though they have not any transgressions,'—meaning, doubtless, *actual sins*."*

An instance of the haste and inaccuracy with which pædobaptist professors draw their conclusions is exhibited in the assertion of Dr. Woods,† that these passages "plainly show what was *the practice of the churches* in regard to infant baptism in his day." Now, the most cursory reader will at once perceive that nothing is said respecting its being then the general practice of *the churches* to baptize infants (no matter, indeed, if it were); the fact of baptizing infants only when in immediate danger of death (as commended by Gregory) would fully accord with these passages, without supposing the practice to be general, as the doctor evidently does.

An incident remarkable in the history of baptism pertains to this century. While numerous cases of the baptism of adults are recorded, it is in the latter part of this century that the first record of the baptism of a child is made in the history of the world. This child was Galates, the dying son of the Emperor Valens, by whose command he was baptized. The age of this prince is, however, uncertain, and the alleging of his illness as the cause of his baptism is proof that infant baptism was not then a general practice.

Another fact, which will hereafter be more fully stated, deserves here to be mentioned. Up to this time, and indeed for many centuries after, all the rituals are couched in language suitable only to adults. This fact is entirely incon-

* Wood's Lectures on Infant Baptism, pp. 128, 129. † Ibid. p. 128.

sistent with the idea that the baptism of babes was a practice of the early ages. The ceremonies also, which appear ridiculous as applied to infants, had their origin at the baptism of adults. These, as well as the doctrines connected with infant baptism, will be noticed more particularly in subsequent chapters.

A very interesting fact connected with the history of baptism in the fifth century is, that the Bishop of Rome, St. Boniface, evidently did not understand the *reasonableness* of infant baptism. As St. Augustine was a *great reasoner*, he applied to him, if not to solve his doubts, at least to furnish him with arguments against those who opposed the baptism of babes. His questions are so plain that the reader might almost suppose Boniface to be a Baptist deacon, and St. Augustine a pædobaptist D. D. "Suppose," says the Bishop of Rome, addressing Augustine, "I set before you an infant, and ask you whether, when he grows up, he will be a chaste man or a thief? Your answer doubtless will be, *I cannot tell.* And whether he, in that infant age, have any good or evil thoughts? You will say, *I know not.* Since you therefore dare not say any thing, either concerning his future behavior or his present thoughts, what is the meaning that, when they are brought to baptism, their parents, as sponsors for them, make answer and say, to the inquiry Does he believe in God, *He does believe?* . . . . I entreat you to give me a short answer to these questions, in such a manner as that you do not urge to me the prescription or the customariness of the thing, but give me *the reason* of the thing."*

It is not necessary here to enter on the particulars of Augustine's reply. In its close he observes, almost angrily, "I have given such an answer to your question as I suppose

* Is not this a plain acknowledgement that Boniface did not claim *scriptural authority* for infant baptism, but only *prescription* or *custom?*

is to ignorant or contentious persons not enough, and to understanding and quiet people perhaps more than enough." What the reasonings of this eloquent penitent were is nothing to the present purpose; but the fact that people were so "ignorant" and so "contentious" upon the subject of baptism as to render it necessary for the Bishop of Rome to write to Augustine about it, shows clearly that Augustine's efforts had not yet settled the minds of men on this subject.†

The sum of the evidence of history is this:—that infant baptism is first clearly alluded to by Origen; that it was first found in actual practice in Africa, patronized by Cyprian, in the middle of the third century; that it was admitted in case of danger of death in Europe, in the fourth century; that many eminent men, sons of Christian parents, were not baptized till more than thirty years of age, so late as the fourth century; that, after the accession of Constantine, the clergy endeavored to promote baptism at a very early age; that, in the fifth century, Augustine employed all his powers to promote the baptism of new-born infants, which was invariably followed by the administration of the other ordinance; and that this practice was founded on doctrines which, if true, rendered it necessary to every humane mind.

Having selected from the writings of the Fathers all the passages relating to baptism in the third century, and as many as are necessary to prove its commencement in the Roman and Greek churches in the fourth century, and its extensive prevalence in the fifth, it may be well to remind

* This insolent style of pædobaptists towards Baptists descended from Augustine to Calvin, who calls them "furious beasts," and I know not what else. A *little remnant* of this arrogance is still discerned in *some* pædobaptists of the present age.

† This is another important fact which Dr. Woods has not thought it worth while to put his students in possession of, though he has referred to Augustine's letter as proof that infant baptism was universally practised by the church.

the reader that the works, in whole or in part, of more than forty Fathers have come down to us; and that, while they are replete with allusions to the baptism of adults, until the time of Augustine (and all but five of them lived before or during his time) there are only a few passages in three or four of them that are claimed to relate to infant baptism; and that all who preceded the fourth century, excepting Origen and Cyprian, have been shown to have no reference to babes. Is it possible that this could be the state of the case, if the practice of infant baptism had been universal from the time of the apostles?

Reader, are you satisfied on such evidence, or rather such *want of evidence*, as this, to make a serious addition to the divine word—I may say, to do away with an ordinance of Christ, as it existed under his authority? For this is, in effect, the result of infant baptism. To whatever extent it exists, the command to "believe and be baptized" is made of "none effect"—by what Origen, Augustine, Wall, and the host of pædobaptists I have quoted, acknowledge to be only a tradition!

SECTION VIII.

BAPTISM AS PRACTISED BY THE CHURCHES NOT INVOLVED IN THE GREAT APOSTASY.

From the fifth century, the age in which the foundation of the apostate churches, both of Greece and Rome, was firmly laid, by their success in taking ecclesiastical possession of humanity in its state of unconscious infancy, and afterwards holding over it the terrors of excommunication, poverty, and death, if it dared dispute the system into which

it had been baptized—from that time to the present babes have been the subjects of baptism, without doubt. It was much later, however, than the fifth century, before this error penetrated the more distant or more secluded parts of the Roman empire. There is good evidence that the practice of baptizing infants was brought into England by Austin, at the close of the sixth century; and that his mission, which was to reduce that country to the authority of the see of Rome, failed to obtain the assent of the ancient British Christians, because he demanded that they should "gyve crysendome to"—that is, baptize—their children. It is recorded that this arrogant priest employed the Saxon sword where his priestly authority failed; but his efforts were by no means crowned with entire success.

The practice of baptism in the reformed churches, as differing both from that of the New Testament and that of Cyprian and Augustine, will form the subject of a subsequent chapter.

I shall now trace its history, so far as the absence of documentary evidence respecting the details of that history will admit, amidst those churches which were not involved in the despotism and superstition of the great apostasy. The literature of the dark ages was wholly controlled by the system of spiritual tyranny under which the church groaned. The invention of printing was destined for a later period. The liberty of the press would, indeed, have given us a history of the true church; but then it would have doomed the demon of superstition and blasphemy to torment "before his time"—"the end" was "not yet." We have to glean the early history of the "witnesses" from the writings of the enemies who slew them. Nor is this all; the documents written by these inquisitors, and by other Romish persecutors, have never yet been thoroughly examined* by any

* This is a work which the Baptists ought immediately to undertake.

but pædobaptists, either Popish or Protestant. Every reader will perceive, therefore, that he may reasonably add to the weight of this testimony, and the conclusions he draws from it.

The history of the true church must be sought among the numerous bodies of dissenters from the state religion of Constantine and his successors. I am well aware that some of those dissenters denied the deity of Christ, and otherwise adopted erroneous sentiments; but this was far from being the case with all of them; and great allowance in each case must be made, from the fact that we have their history from the pens of those whose sordid interest and unhallowed delight it was to slander and misrepresent them.

The separatists from the church establishment of the Roman empire generally agreed that the scriptures were the only rule of faith and practice, in opposition to the general but corrupt doctrine that tradition and the authority of the church were the safe guides: that the civil magistrate had no authority in matters of religion: and that a national church was corrupt and antichristian. For this last reason almost all of them rebaptized those who joined their communion, whether they had been baptized in their infancy or at the age of maturity. It does not, therefore, certainly follow from the fact of their rebaptizing that they repudiated infant baptism as such; but that this was the case with many of them there is satisfactory evidence.

Even before christianity became the religion of the Roman empire, through the increasing worldliness of the church large secessions of the more devout portion of it occurred. The Novatianists seceded from the church of Rome in the

A Baptist only can venture to search out the history of the true church, without feeling in danger, to say the least, of undermining his own. The cause of truth and the honor of our denomination demand that this work be immediately undertaken, at whatever cost.

middle of the third century, and were called Cathari (a term equivalent to Puritan for their strict adherence to the rules of piety. This body disclaimed all communion with the so called catholic church, and it has had successors, both in faith and practice, through all subsequent ages. At the time of this secession infant baptism had not been recognized in the Latin church, except in urgent necessity; and *there is no evidence that these puritans ever adopted the practice*, though they existed in large numbers in the fifth century, when it had become common in the national church.

The Novatianists took their rise from Novatian, a presbyter of Rome, A. D. 251. The ground of the separation was the disgraceful laxity the church manifested, in receiving back those who had apostatized in times of persecution. As I have already intimated, they re-baptized all who joined their communion; and there is no absolute certainty, as far as the documentary history of the early ages has yet been brought to light, whether the Novatians rejected infant baptism or not. Mr. Robinson says they were "trinitarian baptists;" and that is rendered the more probable, since Claudius Leyssell, the popish archbishop, attributes the rise of the Waldensian heresy (of which denying infant baptism was one of the principal features) to a pastor, named Leo, leaving Rome at this period for the Vaudois. During the different periods of religious tranquility under some of the pagan emperors, as well as during the reign of Constantine, and subsequently under the Gothic kings, these puritans increased rapidly, till the alternate influences of corruption and persecution compelled them to abandon the cities and plains for the privacy and protection of the mountainous regions.

The Donatists seceded from the national church in Africa in the fourth century, and re-baptized all who joined their communion. It is uncertain whether they baptized infants or not.

"The Donatists and Novatianists very nearly resembled each other in doctrines and discipline. Indeed, they are charged by Crispin, a French historian, with holding together in the following things:—first, for purity of church members, by asserting that none ought to be admitted into the church but such as are visibly true believers and real saints; secondly, for purity of church discipline; thirdly, for the independency of each church; and, fourthly, they baptized again those whose first baptism they had reason to doubt. They were consequently termed re-baptizers and anabaptists. Osiander says our modern anabaptists were the same with the Donatists of old. Fuller, the English church historian, asserts that the baptists in England in his days were the Donatists new dipped."*

The Luciferians, a body of seceders so called from Lucifer, a Sardinian bishop, it clearly appears, from the discourses of St. Augustine, refused to baptize infants, contrary, as he says, to the then practice of the church.

We have seen that the Novatianists continued in Italy till the end of the sixth century. In the seventh century churches holding similar sentiments existed, according to the testimony of Gibbon, under the title of Paulicians, in the north of Italy. In the eighth century, as we are informed by Benizo, bishop of Sutrium, the Paterines arose, and became conspicuous during the pontificate of Stephen II. "The catholics of those times baptized by immersion: the Paterines, therefore, in all their branches, made no complaint of the mode of baptizing; but, when they were examined, they objected vehemently against the baptism of infants, and condemned it as an error.

"At different periods, and from various causes, these baptists considerably increased. Those of their churches where

* Orchard's H. t. For. Bap. p. 85.—Dr. Miller will, perhaps, admire Fuller's spirit, but how will he dispose of the fact he states?

baptism was administered were known by the name of baptismal churches; and to such churches all the christians in the vicinage flocked for infant baptism. When christianity spread into the country, the people met for worship where they could, but all candidates came up to the baptismal church to receive the ordinance. In time baptisteries were built in the country, and, like the churches, were resorted to by the neighboring inhabitants. There was a shadow of this among the reformed churches of Piedmont.

"Atto, bishop of Vercelli, complained of these people in 946, as other clergy had done before; but, from this period until the thirteenth century, dissidents continued to increase and multiply. The wickedness of the clergy considerably aided the cause of dissent. There was no legal power in Italy in those times to put heretics to death. This kingdom, therefore, would very naturally become a retreat to those who suffered in other provinces on account of religion. Its contiguity to France and Spain, which kingdoms abounded with christians of this sort, would naturally aid and strengthen their interests; besides, the preaching of Claude, with other reformers, added to the number of dissenters. All these were incorporated into the churches of Italy, and were now known by the term Paterines; 'a name which came,' says Mezeray, 'from the glory they took in suffering patiently for *the truth*."*

"Among these people a reformer, or principal minister, appeared, who attained some eminency—Gundulphus. Having given some persons a portion of spiritual instruction, he sent them forth as itinerants to preach the gospel. Some of his followers were arrested in Flanders; and on their examination they acknowledged they were followers of Gundulphus. 'They are charged,' says Dr. Allix, 'with abhorring baptism *i. e.* the catholic baptism.' These disciples and

* History of France, p. 287.

in reply, 'The law and discipline we have received of our master will not appear contrary, either to the gospel decrees or apostolical institutions, if carefully looked into. This discipline consists in leaving the world, in bridling carnal concupiscence, in providing a livelihood by the labor of our hands, in hurting nobody, and affording charity to all, &c. This is the sum of our justification, to which the use of baptism can superadd nothing. But, if any say that some sacrament lies hid in baptism, the force of it is taken off by three causes. 1st, Because the reprobate life of ministers can afford no saving remedy to the persons baptized. 2dly, Because whatever sins are renounced at the font are afterwards taken up again in life and practice. 3dly, Because a strange will, a strange faith, and a strange confession, do not seem to belong to a little child, who neither wills nor runs, who knoweth nothing of faith, and is altogether ignorant of his own good and salvation, in whom there can be no desire of regeneration, and from whom no confession of faith can be expected.'* That these people held views on the ordinances similar to the Baptists of modern times is allowed by all respectable writers.

"The Paterines were, in 1040, become very numerous and conspicuous at Milan, which was their principal residence; and here they flourished at least two hundred years. They had no connexion with the church, nor with the Fathers, considering them as corrupters of christianity.

"Their churches were divided into sixteen compartments, such as the English Baptists would call Associations. Each of these was subdivided into parts, which would here be called churches, or congregations. In Milan there was a street called Pararia, where it is supposed they met for worship. Their bishops and officers were mechanics, weavers, shoemakers, who maintained themselves by their industry.

* Allix's Remarks on the Churches of Piedmont, ch. xi. pp. 94, 95.

One of their principal churches was that of Concorezzo, in the Milanese; and the members of churches in this Association were more than 1,500. During the kingdom of the Goths and Lombards, the Anabaptists, as the catholics call them, had their share of churches and baptisteries, during which time they held no communion with any hierarchy. After the ruin of these kingdoms, laws were issued by the emperors to deprive dissenters of baptismal churches, and to secure them to the catholic clergy. Consequently the brethren worshipped in private houses, under different names. Each of the houses where they met seemed to be occupied by one of the brethren: they were marked so as to be known only among themselves, and they never met in large companies in persecuting times; and, though they differed in some things, yet there was a perfect agreement in all those points mentioned above.

"In process of time they sent colonies into almost all the other provinces of Europe, and formed gradually a considerable number of religious assemblies, who adhered to their doctrine. A set of men like to the Paulicians, or Paterines, proceeded in vast numbers out of Italy in the following ages, and spread like an inundation through all the European provinces."*

The next distinct evidence that we have of a sect denying infant baptism, is that arising from the evangelical labors of Bruno and Berengarius, the former a bishop and the latter a deacon of the church at Angers, in France.

"One proof," says Crosby,† "that these men were against infant baptism, is from a letter written by Deadwinus, bishop of Liege, to Henry I. of France, in which are these words: 'There is a report come of France, and which goes through all Germany, that these two, viz. Bruno and Berengarius, do

* Orchard's History of Foreign Baptists, pp. 139–141.

† History of Baptists, vol. i. preface, p. xlii.

maintain that the Lord's body (the host) is not the body, but a shadow and figure of the Lord's body. And they do disannul lawful marriages; and, as far as in them lies, overthrow the baptism of infants.' The other proof produced is from Guitmund, who wrote against Berengarius towards the latter end of his life. This author, after he had taken notice of the aforementioned letter, and the opinions therein laid to his charge, says, 'that Berengarius, finding that those two opinions (of marriage and baptism) would not be endured by the ears even of the worst men that were, and that there was no pretence in scripture to be brought for them, betook himself wholly to uphold the other (viz. that against transubstantiation), in which he seemed to have the testimony of the senses on his side, and against which none of the holy fathers had so fully spoken, and for which he picked up some reasons, and some places of scripture misunderstood.' (This seems to be agreeable to the method of the first authors of the present reformation in England and Germany. They set out with a design to rescue both the sacraments from their corruptions and abuses, as has been proved; yet, finding the common people incapable of receiving so great an alteration at once, dropped the business of opposing the baptism of children, and bent their chief efforts against transubstantiation.) These were two famous champions for the truth against popish errors and superstitions; especially the latter. And for above a hundred years after, all that stood up for the purity of the Christian church were called Berengarians, and so many were his followers, that Matthew Paris says he drew all France, Italy, and England to his opinion."*

The Waldenses derive their name from the Latin term *vallis*, corresponding with the English *valley*. They were inhabitants of some most beautiful valleys, enclosed from the rest of the world where "Alps o'er Alps arise." Moun-

* Crosby's Hist. Eng. Bapt. Preface, pp. xlii. xliii.

tainous regions have been the favorite retreats of liberty, both civil and religious, in all ages. The children of God delight in God's own bulwarks—types as they are of the rock Christ—"Let the inhabitants of the rock sing."* It is only from the confessions of their opponents that we have any idea how long these vales had been planted with plants of the Lord's right hand planting. They affirm that "these heretics (as the inquisitors call them) were the more dangerous on account of the antiquity of their errors, which they derived from the fourth century." In all probability, the Novatianists, who originated in Rome itself, as they found the cities and plains of Italy become more and more polluted, retired to those mountain recesses, where the Lord had provided a retreat for them till the time came that they should be slain. I do not mean to affirm that none of them admitted infants to baptism: though I apprehend the idea to be to a great extent an error, arising from the misapprehension of the term *infant* which has already been discussed. I shall quote from one of their published confessions of faith, and the reader will then be able to judge for himself. The following is the twelfth article of their confession of A. D. 1120.

"We consider the sacraments as signs of holy things, or as visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper, and even necessary, that believers use these symbols or visible forms, when it can be done. Notwithstanding which, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they can have neither place nor opportunity of observing them. We believe that in the ordinance of baptism the water is the visible and external sign, which represents to us that which, by virtue of God's invisible operation, is within us—namely, the renovation of our minds, and the mortification of our members, through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And by this ordinance we are received into

* Isa. xlii. 11.

the holy congregation of God's people, previously professing and declaring our faith and change of life."*

When these devoted Christians were either murdered or expelled from their peaceful homes, those who escaped wandered through France, Germany, England, and Bohemia; and throughout Europe they prepared the ground, and sowed the seed that Wickliffe, Huss, and Jerome nurtured, the last of them with their blood, and which Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, and Knox came to reap. Contemporaneously with them, however, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, there existed in Germany a numerous body of Cathari, "a sort of people," says the abbot Egbert, "very pernicious to the catholic faith," because they "maintained their opinions by authority of scripture." He particularly notices, too, their enormous offence in "denying the utility of baptism to infants, 'which,' say they, 'through their incapacity, avails nothing to their salvation'"—an error, by the way, if it be one, very apt to follow the pernicious practice of "maintaining opinions by the authority of scripture." These Cathari are represented by the abbot as "insisting that baptism ought to be delayed till they come to years of discretion, and that, even then, those only should be baptized who make a personal profession of faith, and desire it."† "They are increased," says Egbert, "to great multitudes throughout all countries"—alluding to Germany, Flanders, France, Savoy, and Milan.

In the same century Peter de Bruys appeared as an advocate of the truth in the south of France. His doctrinal sentiments have not been particularly preserved. "All we know is," says Mosheim,‡ "that he rejected infant baptism; con-

* Jones's Church History, pp. 47—51. *Later* confessions are to be found maintaining infant baptism.

† Sermon against the Cathari. Bib. Pat. tom. ii. pp. 99, 106.

‡ Eccl. Hist. cent. xii. part ii. ch. v.

sured with severity the corrupt and licentious manners of the clergy; treated the festivals and ceremonies of the catholic church with the utmost contempt; and held private assemblies, in which he explained and circulated his peculiar sentiments."

"Peter de Bruys continued his labors during a period of twenty years, when he was called to seal his testimony with his blood. He was committed to the flames at St. Giles, a city of Languedoc, in France, by an enraged populace, instigated by the clergy of the catholic church, who very justly apprehended their traffic to be in danger from this new and intrepid reformer.

"Within five years of de Bruys's martyrdom, Henry of Toulouse, who had been a disciple of his, appeared as a reformer. He traveled through different provinces, and exercised his ministerial functions in all places with the utmost applause from the people. He declaimed with great vehemence and fervor against the vices of the clergy, and the superstitions they had introduced into the church. Contemporary with Bruys, Henry, and Arnold, was that extraordinary man, Bernard, abbot of Clairval, in France, whose learning and sanctity rendered him an object of general admiration, and whose counsel decided the policy of the catholic community. Writing to the count of St. Giles, Bernard thus describes the state of affairs. 'How great are the evils which we have heard and known to be done by Henry, the heretic, and which he is still every day doing in the churches of God! He wanders up and down in your country in sheep-clothing, being a ravenous wolf; but, according to the hint given by our Lord, we know him by his fruits. The churches are without people—the people without priests—priests without reverence—and lastly, christians without Christ. The life of Christ is denied to infants by refusing them the grace of baptism, nor are they suffered to

draw near unto salvation, though our Saviour tenderly cried out on their behalf, "Suffer," &c. O most unhappy people!'

"To recover the strayed flocks, Bernard, with other clergy of note, visited those parts of France which were most infected with Henry's sentiments. Henry was found in the territory of the earl of St. Giles, and though he fled, and remained secreted for some time, yet it is supposed he was afterwards arrested by some catholic bishop. What end Henry came to is unknown, though Allix remarks, it is said he was a martyr at Toulouse.*

"From the zeal and assiduity of Gundulphus and Arnold in Italy, with Berenger, Peter de Bruys, and Henry in France, the followers and disciples of these reformers became sufficiently numerous to excite alarm in the catholic church, before Waldo of Lyons appeared as a reformer. They were in different kingdoms known by different names, and are supposed at this period to have amounted to *eight hundred thousand* in profession."†

The celebrated Arnold of Brescia, who in these days carried the spirit of reform (perhaps, indeed, too violently for the meekness of christian character) to the very palace of the pontiff himself, was also "*de sacramento altaris et baptismo parvulorum non sane*"—"unsound respecting the sacrament of the altar and infant baptism."‡ That is, he

* Allix's Albig. ch. xiv. p. 128.

† Orchard's History of Foreign Baptists, pp. 170—182. The efforts of the Rev. G. H. Orchard, in his History of Foreign Baptists, are highly commendable and satisfactory. They will, I trust, excite further research amidst documents which never yet have been examined for the purpose of bringing out the truth.

‡ Dr. Miller thus ventures his *dicta* in the face of all history.

"*I can assure you, my friends, with the utmost candor and confidence, after much careful inquiry on the subject*, that, *for more than fifteen hundred years after the birth of Christ, there was not a single society* of professing christians on earth *who opposed infant baptism* on any thing like the grounds which distinguish our modern Baptist brethren. It is

denied the popish doctrine of transubstantiation and the practice of infant baptism.

These bodies existed, or rather attracted the notice of ecclesiastics, five hundred years before the reformation; and the candid reader will perceive that there is all the evidence which the circumstance of the point of history being almost entirely in the hands of Roman Catholics could possibly admit, that bodies of Christians practising the immersion of believers only have existed, from the period when infant baptism was at all considerably practised (the fourth century), down to the era of the reformation. Certainly, in England, as well as Bohemia and other countries, it was the preaching of Waldensian teachers that gave rise to the first Baptist churches after the time of Austin. That among the followers of Wicklife, who were the first fruits of the Waldensian seed, infant baptism was not held in esteem, does not admit of a doubt.

The oldest congregational churches in England, both Baptist and pædobaptist, trace their origin to a period anterior to any of the efforts of Luther or Calvin. Henry VIII. was wont to burn Baptists and papists at the same stake; these were not German Baptists, of recent origin, but the descendants of Lollards or Waldenses. There is an original stream of the true church independent of the reformation, though in later times the streams overflow and intermingle their waters. That there has been, since the days of our Saviour, an uninterrupted succession of Baptists, if not of Baptist churches, I have not a moment's doubt. The evidence I have adduced is sufficient to justify this statement; but further research

an *undoubted fact* that the people known in ecclesiastical history under the name of the Anabaptists, who arose in Germany in the year 1522, were *the very first body of people* in the whole christian world *who rejected the baptism of infants* on the principles now adopted by the antipædobaptist body."—*Miller's Infant Baptism*, p. 21.

amidst the documentary evidence of Europe may yet throw additional light on this point.

It is, then, among men who dared to brave the power of papal despotism in its highest glory, as well as to dispel the darkness of papal ignorance in its deepest night, that correct sentiments on the subject of baptism are found to prevail; men of whom the "world was not worthy;" men whose fearless labors have planted, and whose blood has nurtured, the tree of liberty and of truth; whose works have followed them in long and brilliant train; and whose glory shall shine resplendently in that eternal day, when the deeds of the warrior and the subtleties of the scholar shall have faded for ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOCTRINES WHICH INTRODUCED AND ACCOMPANIED INFANT BAPTISM.

SECTION I.

PREFERENCE OF FORMS TO SPIRITUALITY.

IF it be a true adage that "a man may be known by the company he keeps," the case of infant baptism is a sad one. Till after the reformation it is never found, except, not only in association with, but dependent upon, doctrines at which every enlightened Christian revolts; till at length it becomes identified with abominations so vile, that the writer could not allude to them in mere infancy without shocking the feelings of every delicate mind—and yet the abominations to which I refer are but the necessary result of benevolence, if the *doctrines* on which infant baptism was *originally based* are true.

Pædobaptist writers, when quoting from Origen, Cyprian, and Augustine, find it necessary to say,—"With the absurd doctrines of these writers we have nothing to do." I am not so sure of this. Suppose it should prove that an "absurd doctrine" is the reason always given in the writings of the Fathers for a certain practice; would it not justly lead to suspicion, to say the least, that *the doctrine was the basis of the practice*, and *introduced it?* Let us pursue this reasonable inquiry, with respect to the *doctrines always found* in connexion with the *fact* of infant baptism.

First, then, we find the idea, that the administration of the outward ordinance to the infant is invariably attended with immediate and concurrent spiritual blessings of the highest consequence. This is but one specimen of the general departure from the pure spiritual philosophy of the Scriptures, which prevailed in the earliest ages of the church. The observations of Mr. Taylor on this point are admirable.

"How much turns often (and it is an observation perpetually offering itself in the perusal of church history) upon an insensible substitution of a *technical*, for the general and genuine sense of an ethical term! It was just by the aid of some of these hardly perceptible substitutions, that the eminent men we have now to do with (*and Cyprian not less than any*) found the ready means of gaining *an apparent scriptural warranty for practices flagrantly contravening the spirit and meaning of scriptural morality.* Thus it is that he reiterates his quotations from the Psalms and the book of Proverbs in support of that ecclesiastical *discipline* which the vow of celibacy involved, by adducing texts in which the instruction, correction, or reproof recommended by David or Solomon is rendered *disciplina* in the Latin version of the Old Testament which he used: as thus —"Those who refuse *instruction* shall perish;" or, as the Latin has it—"those shall perish," and under the anger of the Lord, who infringe the rules of this artificial *discipline*, enjoined for enforcing the system of factitious purity. Tertullian, long before, had appropriated this term in the same manner. The Greek church writers employ the word *philosophy* in a sense nearly equivalent. . . . . I must here remark that, already, the constant and inevitable tendency of *a system essentially superstitious* to fix the attention, even of the best men, with more solicitude upon what is extrinsic and symbolic, than upon what is moral, spiritual, and rational, had fully developed itself in Cyprian's time—in-

deed it is the general characteristic of the early (as of later) church writers; and it is the capital article of the contrast which so forcibly strikes us, in comparing the entire body of ancient religious literature with the Scriptures. The apostles, without contemning or forgetting that which is exterior, give all their serious cares to that which is substantial —to the weighty matters of the soul's condition, spiritual and moral. The Fathers, on the contrary, without contemning, or altogether forgetting, that which is substantial, are fretting themselves perpetually like their modern admirers), and chafing about that which is subsidiary only, and visible; the form, the institution, the discipline, the canon; in a word, the husk of religion, fondly thinking that, so long as the rind and shell at least could be preserved without a flaw, there could be no doubt of the preservation of the kernel! Alas! these ill-directed anxieties left the adversary at his leisure to perforate the shell, and to withdraw the kernel, almost to the last atom!"*

How truly did "the adversary perforate the shell, and withdraw the last atom of the kernel" of the ordinance of baptism, when this "vain philosophy" of the early Fathers led them to apply that saying of our Lord, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," to that holy ordinance! Not one word throughout the whole discourse of our Lord to Nicodemus has the least reference to baptism, or to any other form. He is speaking, first, of the influence of the Spirit in regeneration, and then of the love of God in the sacrifice of his Son —the essentials of salvation. The passage plainly means, "of water, *even* of the Spirit;" the former being the figure of the purifying operation of the latter. I am well aware that even Baptists have been misled by the early Fathers on this point. Of late, however, the incorrectness of their

* Ancient Christianity, p. 116.

interpretation, and its *formalizing* tendency, have been more generally acknowledged. Certain it is that the reference is to the heavenly state; for any one can see that men can, and do, enter the visible "kingdom of God" without the "Spirit;" and God forbid we should follow the Fathers, in entertaining the idea that none can enter heaven without the "water!"

One of the most glaring instances of the vicious philosophy which led the Fathers to patronize formal institutions of men-made virtue, instead of the simple, spiritual truths of the New Testament, is the bold and zealous advocacy, nay, the impious exaltation, of the virtue of perpetual virginity. This "forbidding to marry" is the favorite doctrine (above all others) of those great patrons of infant baptism, Cyprian and Augustine. Indeed, absurd and corrupting as it was, this doctrine evidently preceded, as well as accompanied, that of infant baptism; for even Tertullian, who could argue so strongly against administering baptism to children, maintained strenuously the monstrous notion we are referring to.

"The command, 'Increase and multiply,'" says this celebrated Father, "is abolished. Yet, as I think (contrary to the Gnostic opinion), this command in the first instance, and now the removal of it, are from one and the same God; who then, and in that early seed-time of the human race, gave the reins to the marrying principle until the world should be replenished, and until he had prepared the elements of a new scheme of discipline. But now, in this conclusion of the ages, he restrains what once he had let loose, and revokes what he had permitted. The same reason governs the continuance at first of that which is to prepare for the future. In a thousand instances indulgence is granted to the beginnings of things. So it is that a man plants a wood and allows it to grow, intending in due time to use the

axe. The wood, then, is the old dispensation, which is done away by the gospel, in which the axe is laid to the root of the tree."

Cyprian enters largely upon the glory of the state of perpetual virginity. After reprehending at length, and on various grounds, costly and meretricious decorations of the person—the means and materials of which, says the good bishop, were given to mankind by the apostate angels—he proceeds to specify and reprove still more criminal excesses which had become matter of scandal within and without the church, and had afforded too much color to the calumnies of the heathen. "Listen, then, to him who seeks your true welfare; lest, cast off by the Lord, ye be widows before ye be married; adulteresses, not to husbands, but to Christ; and, after having been destined to the highest rewards, ye undergo the severest punishments. . . . . For, consider, while the hundred-fold produce is that of the martyrs, the sixty-fold is yours; and, as they (the martyrs) contemn the body and its delights, so should you. Great are the wages which await you, if faithful; the high reward of virtue, the great recompense to be conferred upon chastity. Not only shall your lot and portion (in the future life) be equal to that of the other sex, but ye shall be equal to the angels of God."*

Can it excite our surprise that a man who could thus go directly in face of the Scriptures, in their plain testimony to the honorable character and divine institution of the marriage state, should blunder egregiously on the institution of baptism? How fond Dr. Miller is of Cyprian! My pædobaptist readers may imagine that there is no connexion between those sentiments of the early Fathers which could consign their daughters to the nunnery that they might have the rank of angels, and their sentiments and practices respect-

* Ancient Christianity, p. 221.

ing the ordinance of baptism; that connexion has, however, been clearly traced out by the author of Ancient Christianity, himself an advocate for the baptism, or rather the *ritualism*, of infants.

"There is, I believe, no controversy," says Mr. Taylor, "concerning the historical fact, that practices had been established, *and that notions were prevalent relating to the ritual parts of Christianity in the fourth century, of which we can discover scarcely a trace in the apostolic age. No one pretends to affirm that Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine speak of baptism and the eucharist precisely as Paul, and Peter, and John had spoken of them.* A difference, then, in this respect, had arisen in the course of three hundred years; but this difference, say the modern advocates of church principles, was nothing more than the ripening, or natural expansion, of certain rudiments, which the apostles had mingled, silently, yet designedly, with the Christian institute. Discerning, or thinking that we discern these rudiments, even in the apostolic writings, we do well, it is said, to derive our own notions and practices from the nature, rather than from the cradle-era of their history. If what was done and taught by the Nicene divines, in regard to the sacraments, was nothing more than what had been foreseen and intended by the apostles, our part is to consult the Nicene, rather than the apostolic writings, on such points.

"But, let it be asked, under whose auspices had this gradual expansion of ritual notions and practices been effected? This question is surely a pertinent one, and the answer it must receive brings us at once to the alleged connexion between the *ascetic institute* (especially the *clerical and monastic celibacy*) and the *sacramental doctrine and practice* of the Nicene age.

"This doctrine and this practice were nothing else than

what men, so placed as were the clergy of the ancient church, would inevitably move toward and adopt. That an unmarried clergy, professing and admiring the wildest extravagancies of the oriental ascetic system, should have adhered, century after century, to the modesty, simplicity, and unobtrusive seriousness of the apostolic sacramental doctrine, would have been a miracle far more astounding than any of those to which the church, even in St. Dunstan's time, pretended. Every principle of human nature forbids such an incongruity, nor is an example of the sort presented by history—it could not have been—it is not to be believed—it was not the fact. The Nicene sacramental doctrine was just such as might best concur and accord with the ascetic feeling and condition of the clerical body.

"This *insensible substitution of the form for the substance*, is so prominently characteristic of the ascetic scheme of life, that I cannot suppose it to be called in question. But now, *what was the sacramental doctrine of the very same men?* It was—not a denial of grace and of the spiritual realities of the Christian life, but a putting foremost, and a talking most of, the rite *as a rite*. The very men who were accustomed to use the words sanctity and virginity, continence and celibacy, as synonymous terms or as equivalents, did also *constantly speak of baptism and of the eucharist as intrinsically holy, and as conveying holiness*; or, at the least, they so held up these rites before the people as led them to pay a superstitious and fatally exclusive regard to the ceremony, *while moral and spiritual qualities, or states of the heart, were lost sight of*. The very man who thinks himself as holy as Gabriel because a virgin, and who reckons so many hours' fasting to be worth a certain quantum of expiatory merit, is he who attributes a justifying and sanctifying efficacy to baptismal water, and believes that the swallowing, or the carrying about with him, a consecrated wafer,

shall get him admitted into heaven! Is there, then, *no oneness of principle* in these several notions? But, if the analogy be admitted, then, to be consistent, we should either admit the ascetic along with the sacramental doctrine, *both springing as they do, from the same principle:* or else, rejecting that principle, disallow both of its consequences."*

It is to be presumed that pædobaptist divines, in their recent crusade against nunneries, were not aware that their particular friend Cyprian had so high an opinion of them. That both the number of these "virgins" (nuns) was greater, and their moral character vastly worse, than at almost any time since, might be proved in ten lines, if I dare offend the delicacy of my readers by quoting them. That the circumstances in which Cyprian was placed, surrounded by virgins for whom he says "the church had often to weep," on account of "the horrid tales which got abroad," rendered him a zealous advocate for the baptism of babes, is not at all marvellous; the lives of infants introduced into the world in the circumstances alluded to being peculiarly uncertain, and baptism being necessary to their salvation, his benevolent feelings naturally indicated such a course. It is believed that, in those evil times in which the lives of certain infants have been cut very short, the monks did not fail to make them "children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," by baptism, before they were called to exchange worlds.†

Much more, and that immediately to the purpose, might be adduced, respecting the connexion of this doctrinal mark of the apostasy (forbidding to marry) with corrupt notions of the sacraments, but I forbear. In the following section I

* Ancient Christianity, pp. 530–532, 535.

† The author would regret to have it rendered necessary that he should enter into further particulars as to the moral condition of the church when the practice of infant baptism is first found to exist.

shall notice more particularly the *leading doctrinal errors relating directly to baptism itself*, which closely rendered baptism necessary to those by whom they were believed, and evidently laid the foundation for its general adoption.

SECTION II.

DOCTRINES OF THE NECESSITY AND EFFICACY OF BAPTISM TO REGENERATION, AND REMISSION OF ORIGINAL SIN.

A DOCTRINAL ERROR, which very early infected the Fathers of the church, was that of identifying the outward ordinance with the *impartation of regenerating grace*, instead of permitting it to preserve its scriptural position, of being *a sign of grace already possessed*. The doctrine of the Fathers of infant baptism was, that the soul was regenerated in the act of baptism. When it came to be believed that regeneration could, except in very particular cases (of which infancy was not deemed one), be had only in baptism, it became clearly an act alike of duty and benevolence to baptize babes, and, in cases of danger, at the earliest possible opportunity.

BASIL.—"Baptism is the soul regenerated."

AMBROSE.—"Who regenerated thee of the water and the Holy Spirit."

CHRYSOSTOM.—"Baptism is the cleansing of the sins by the Holy Spirit."

AUGUSTINE.—"Baptism washes the body, and signifies what is done in the soul."

That the doctrine of the regeneration of the soul by baptism, in the case of infants especially, was held by all the

Fathers from the third century, is too well known to admit of a doubt; and the evidence that these Fathers considered baptismal regeneration an undoubted apostolic *doctrine*, is inconceivably more complete than that they considered infant baptism an apostolic *tradition*.

The next error in doctrine which facilitated the introduction of infant baptism, was its assumed necessity to the removal of Adam's sin, in which these Fathers supposed infants were implicated.

The necessity of washing away original sin by baptism is thus affirmed by Origen, if indeed this passage be genuine: —"And it is *for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized.*" The whole passage has been already quoted in Chap. VII. Sect. vi. p. 244.

The same sentiment is distinctly stated by Cyprian, who, it will be remembered, gives us the first certain information of the practice of infant baptism:—"If any thing could be an obstacle to persons against their obtaining the grace, the adult, and the grown and the elder men, would be rather hindered by their more grievous sins. If, then, the greatest offenders, and they that have grievously sinned against God before, have, when they afterward come to believe, forgiveness of their sins—and no person is kept off from baptism and the grace—how much less reason is there to refuse an infant, who, being newly born, has no sins, save that, being descended from Adam according to the flesh, he from his very birth contracted the contagion of the death anciently threatened; who comes for this reason more easily to receive forgiveness of sins, because they are not his own but others' sins that are forgiven him."

Gregory Nazianzen, after he has given his opinion that, for children in good health, it is better they should wait till they are three years old, says—"Yet, by reason of those

sudden assaults of danger that are by no endeavor to be prevented, it is by all means necessary that they be *secured* by the laver [of baptism]."

The following is a singular specimen of the combination of the style of the heathen philosophers with christian theology. Jerome, however, seems to think that the consequences of the neglect of baptism will fall rather on the parent than on the child, which is a much more reasonable idea than most of the Fathers entertain.

"And how then is it true, you will say, that the sins of the fathers are not imputed to the children, nor those of the children to the fathers, but the 'soul that sinneth it shall die?'

"This is said of those who have understanding, of such as he was of whom it is written in the gospels, *He is of age, let him speak for himself*: but he that is a child, and thinks as a child (until such time as he comes at years of discretion, and Pythagoras's letter Υ do bring him to the place where the road parts into two), his good deeds as well as his evil deeds are imputed to his parents. Unless you will think that the children of Christians are themselves only under the guilt of the sin, if they do not receive baptism; and that the whole house is not imputed to those also who would not give it them, especially at that time when they that were to receive it could make no opposition against the receiving it. As also, on the other side (or as also in the kingdom of life), the salvation of merits is the advantage of their parents."*

"The object of infant baptism in particular was, in his view," says Dr. Wiggers, in his able work on Augustinism and Pelagianism, "to free from the imputation of original sin, and from the power of the devil, into which man came by Adam's sin. According to the church formulary, children were baptized 'for the remission of sins.' Actual sin (*peccatum propriam*) new-born children could not commit. It

* Jerome's Letter to Leta.

is, therefore, original sin which they are forgiven through baptism, and by this the devil is expelled from them. They are therefore blown upon and exorcised, and likewise renounce him. The grace of God is imparted to them in baptism in a mysterious manner. The exhibition of his doctrine on infant baptism is one chief object of Augustine's first piece against the Pelagians. 'As children,' says he, 'are subject to no sins of their own life, the hereditary disease in them is healed by his grace who makes them well by the laver of regeneration.' 'Whosoever is carnally born of this disobedience of the flesh, this Law of sin and death, must be spiritually born again, that he may not only be introduced into the kingdom of God, but also be freed from the condemnation of sin. They are, therefore, as truly born in the flesh, subject to the sin and death of the first man, as they are regenerated in baptism to a connexion with the righteousness and eternal life of the other man.' 'By baptism the chain of guilt (*reatus*) is broken, by which the devil held the soul; and the partition is broken down by which he separated man from his Maker.'

"In other works Augustine frequently recurs to his theory of the object of infant baptism. But it is only his doctrine of the power of the devil, as dispelled by baptism, that is more fully developed and presented in them. He speaks thus:—'The power of the devil is really exorcised from infants, and they also renounce it by the heart and mouth of those who carry them to baptism, since they cannot by their own, by which they, delivered from the power of darkness, may be transferred into the kingdom of their Lord. Now, what is it in them by which they are held in the devil's power, until delivered by Christ's baptism? What, but sin? For the devil finds nothing else by which he can subject human nature to his sway, which the good Author had instituted right. But infants have committed no sin of their own

in their life. Hence there remains original sin, by which they are captive under the power of the devil, if they are not delivered by the laver of regeneration and the blood of Christ, and pass into the kingdom of their Redeemer, the power of their jailer being frustrated, and liberality being given them of becoming the children of God who were the children of this world.' "*

According to Augustine, therefore, the doctrine of infant baptism has a necessary effect to purify from sin; and upon this he builds *his* belief that every child dying after baptism, but before the use of reason, and so before pollution by wilful sins, must inherit salvation.

SECTION III.

DOCTRINE OF THE DAMNATION OF UNBAPTIZED INFANTS.

We now arrive at the main doctrine advanced to promote the spread of infant baptism—the doctrine of the eternal damnation of unbaptized infants; and very effectual it was to this end. Wherever this doctrine was received, infant baptism followed as a necessary consequence. The baptism of babes and others at the point of death by pedobaptist ministers, indicates clearly that the doctrine and the practice, having been lawfully joined together by Augustine, cannot be divorced.

With the exception of Origen (who believed all men sinned in a previous state of existence), it is true, indeed, that the

* Historical Presentation of Augustinism and Pelagianism, from the Original Sources; by G. F. Wiggers, D. D., Professor of Theology in the University of Rostock. Translated from the German. With Notes and Additions by Rev. Ralph Emmerson, Professor of Eccl. Hist. in the Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass.

Fathers before Augustine, while they believed baptism necessary and effectual to the regeneration of infants, say nothing with respect to their perishing on account of Adam's sin.

"Now, as the Fathers before Augustine held to no guilt of the Adamitic sin, they could not allow the forgiveness of a sin originating from Adam, or original sin, as an object of infant baptism, just as, on the same ground, they could not admit the condemnation of unbaptized children. They therefore differed from Augustine on this latter point also.

"We cannot here appeal to the old church formula—baptism is 'for the remission of sins'—in order to prove original sin the object of infant baptism. It comes from that early period when only adults were baptized.' But in every adult

* "Our author does not tell us exactly when that period was, nor does he refer us to any authority for the assumption that there ever was such a period in the Christian church. I cannot help thinking, from the uncommonly loose manner in which he has spoken on the topic, that he has never made the early history of infant baptism a subject of much investigation."—*Wiggers on Augustinism and Pelagianism.* [Note of the Translator.]

On this note of Professor Emmerson, the editor of the Christian Review very pungently remarks—"We hardly know which most to admire, the modesty of the translator, or his logic. Does Dr. Wiggers, who, with the greatest facilities, and with *German* scholarship and diligence, has spent his life in examining the original documents pertaining to the history of the early church, need to be *instructed* by his translator on the whole subject of the *origin of* infant baptism? What is probably the comparative amount of *original* investigation on the point made by the two men? Does Dr. Wiggers find himself, in this particular, *among* those who have 'never made the early history of infant baptism a subject of much investigation?' The names of Neander and Gieseler stand confessedly at the very head of *investigating* ecclesiastical historians. To these may be added Munscher, Von Coelln, and Baumgarten-Crusius, holding a similar rank in the history of early religious doctrines; and Winer, Hahn, Olshausen, De Wette, Meyer, and others in *overwhelming numbers* in biblical criticism and antiquities. They have all strangely blundered in the same way with Dr. Wiggers. Augusti, in his Christian Antiquities, maintains the old view. But his rank as a critical antiquarian is inferior to that of Neander, Gieseler,

actual sins might be presumed: and so the formula had its full import."*

Augustine, in one place, professes to believe that the salvation of infants depends on the parent's faith. His allusion to the case of the widow's son is an instance of one of the ingenuity and sophistry of this celebrated author. He says—"On which head we were wont to ask this question also, 'What need there is any account of Christ's baptism does to infants? whereas, even if they have received it, they often die before they are able to make at all any thing of it.' As to which matter, it is pleasingly and truly believed that the faith of those by whom the child is offered to be consecrated profits the child; and that the most sound soundness of the church does commend, that hence every one may judge how profitable his own faith will be to himself, when even another person's faith is useful for the advantage of those that have as yet none of their own: for how could the widow's son be helped by his own faith, whereof, being dead, he could have none? And yet his mother's faith was useful for his being raised to life again."‡

In the following passage he denies himself, and intimates the parent's *faith* to be of no consequence. "Let not that disturb you, that some people do not bring their infants to baptism with that faith (or purpose) that they may by spiritual grace be regenerated to eternal life, but because they

Rheinwald, and others, who are constrained to admit that their own practice cannot be supported by the practice of the apostolic age. Will any one pretend to call in question the fact, that the *majority* of living German critics—and that majority the more *learned portion*—agree with Dr. Wiggers in his statement respecting infant baptism?"—*Christ. Rev.* vol. v. p. 314.

* Wiggers's Augustinism and Pelagianism, pp. 344, 345.

† Does not Augustine here falsify his own affirmation that infant baptism was always and every where received by all?

‡ Augustinus de Libro Arbitrio, lib. iii. c. 23.

think that they do procure or preserve their bodily health by this remedy; for the children do not therefore fail of being regenerated, because they are not brought by the others with that intention."*

The following extract affords a striking exhibition of the specious sophistry of Augustine. "As in the case of the thief, who by necessity went without baptism corporeally, salvation was obtained because he was spiritually a partaker of it by his godly desire; so when that (baptism) is had, salvation is likewise obtained, though the party go without that (faith) which the thief had."

Because the faith of the dying thief was advantageous to him without baptism, since baptism was impossible, so the baptism of an infant without faith is advantageous to him, because faith is impossible! Because it may save one man from starving to have food without a dish, it may save another man to have the dish without the food! St. Augustine, thou art worthy of thy fame!

While, however, the Fathers of the fourth century differed respecting the exact condition of infants dying unbaptized, they generally agreed that they *missed of heaven*. Augustine frequently asserts this doctrine.

Ambrose, in stating his sentiments, appears scarcely to dare to consign a person to eternal woe who is "hindered by unavoidable accident;" but feels that it is "not clear," and seems to have little hope of his reaching heaven, whatever his character may be. "'For, unless any one be born again of water and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' You see he excepts no person, not an infant, not one that is hindered by an unavoidable accident; but suppose that such have freedom from punishment,

* Augustini Epistola ad Bonifacium Episcopum, Epist. xxiii.

which is not clear, yet I question whether they shall have the honor of the kingdom."*

Another writer of this age, after lamenting the irregularity of many ministers baptizing at other times besides Easter, with its pentecost, adds—"As, therefore, I affirm that the respect due to the feast of Easter ought by no means to be diminished, so my meaning is, that as for infants, who by reason of their age are not yet able to speak, and others that are in any case of necessity, they ought to be received with all speed possible, lest it turn to the perdition of our own souls if we deny the water of salvation to every one that stands in need; and they, departing this life, do lose their kingdom and their life."†

St. Augustine at length comes out boldly with his horrible doctrine. In a letter to St. Jerome he says, "Whoever should affirm that infants which die without partaking of this sacrament shall be quickened in Christ, would both go against the apostle's preaching, and also would condemn the whole church (*universam ecclesiam*). . . . . I do not say that infants, dying without the baptism of Christ, will be punished with so great pain, so that it were better for them not to have been born; since our Lord spoke this, not of all sinners, but of the most profligate and impious ones. . . . . Our Lord will come to judge the quick and the dead; and he will make two sides, the right and the left. To those on the left hand he will say, Depart into everlasting fire, &c. To those on the right, Come, and receive the kingdom, &c. He calls one the kingdom; the other, condemnation with the devil. There is no middle place left, where you can put infants. Thus I have explained to you what is *the kingdom*, and what *everlasting fire*; so that,

* Ambrosius, lib. ii. de Abraham Patriarch. c. 11.

† Siricii Episcopi Decretales. Epistola Prima, cap. ii.

‡ Epist. 28.

when you confess the infant will not be in *the kingdom*, you must acknowledge he will be in *everlasting fire*."*

"This inference is of such a kind," observes Dr. Wiggers, in his treatise already referred to, "*that every other part of his whole system ought to have been given up*, simply to avoid a consequence so strikingly severe, and so injurious to the justice of God. But Augustine was, on the one hand, far too obstinate to renounce his position of the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation, and, on the other, far too consistent to deny any conclusion which necessarily flowed from that position. For example, he says,—'We may justly conclude that infants, dying without baptism, will be in the mildest punishment (*in mitissima damnatione*); and that they will be punished more lightly (*tolerabilius*) than those who have committed sins of their own.' Still, he says, in opposition to the eternal life of the Pelagians, 'There is no middle place, so that he who is not with Christ, must be with the devil.' He says—'As nothing else is done for children in baptism but their being incorporated into the church, that is, connected with the body and members of Christ, it follows that, when this is not done for them, they belong to perdition. If the child,' he further says, 'is not delivered from the power of the devil, but remains under it, why dost thou wonder, O Julian, that he who is not allowed to enter the kingdom of God should be with the devil in eternal fire?'"†

Here is the grand support, both of infant baptism and of sprinkling. If the sins of the adult cannot be pardoned without baptism, he must be baptized in some way; and, if children go to "eternal fire" if they die unbaptized, they should certainly be baptized as soon as they are born, or

* Epist. 77. ad Hugonem de Sancto Victore.

† Wiggers's Augustinism and Pelagianism, pp. 73, 74.

even before, if necessary, as is very consistently maintained by the Roman Catholic doctors.*

Quotations from the Fathers, on this point, might be multiplied to any extent; but those already presented are amply sufficient to prove, that, as soon as infant baptism appears on the page of history, it is manifestly *grounded* on the presumed regenerating effect of the ordinance itself, and *subsequently urged* by the necessity of baptism to prevent the eternal damnation of infants on account of Adam's sin. The former sentiment is perpetuated, not only in the Greek and Roman churches, but even in the reformed (or rather *half reformed*) church of England; and that in a manner which has extremely embarrassed the evangelical clergy comprised within her pale.

Another doctrine, by which infant baptism was sustained and propagated, was that of the connexion between the Christian church and the Judaic economy, and the assertion that baptism came in the place of Circumcision. This invention of Cyprian and Augustine is still the stronghold of this error, the introduction of which was speedily followed by the national establishment of christianity. This doctrine has been fully refuted in Chap. V. sect. i.

* "Les enfans étant des sujets capable de recevoir le baptême, il s'ensuit qu'on doit les baptiser, dans le cas de nécessité, aussitôt qu'ils laissent paraître quelque partie du corps sur laquelle on peut appliquer l'eau physiquement; mais non auparavant, et quand ils demeurent entièrement cachés dans le sien de leurs mères. C'est le sentiment commun. Il y a cependant des théologiens qui croient qu'il n'est pas nécessaire qu'un enfant paraisse, et qu'il suffit qu'on puisse faire parvenir l'eau jusqu'à lui par le moyen de quelque instrument; et c'est l'avis de la Sorbonne et la pratique de l'Hôtel Dieu de Paris, dit l'auteur de la 'Conduite des Ames dans la Voie du Salut,' imprimée à Paris, 1653, p. 3 et 4. . . . . On ne doit baptiser des monstres, qui n'ont point de figure humaine. Quand on doute s'ils sont hommes, il faut les baptiser avec cette condition; 'Si tu es homo ego te baptiso,'" &c.—*Bibliothèque Sacrée, ou Dictionnaire Universelle*, &c. Par les Rév. Pères Richard et Giraud, Dominicains. Paris, 1822. Tom. xiv. p. 39.

CHAPTER IX.

CEREMONIES ASSOCIATED WITH INFANT BAPTISM. INFANT COMMUNION.

SECTION I.

CEREMONIES USED IN THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

PRESBYTERIANS and Congregationalists are accustomed to use a form in baptizing infants. Is it unreasonable or impertinent to ask, Whence did that form come? And when is it first to be traced out in ecclesiastical history? Can any of them trace it further back than the "form of administration of John Calvin?" What an overwhelming fact it is, that, *till the time of Calvin, no form for the baptism of infants had ever been devised!* Some of my readers will be incredulous. "How, then," they will ask, "were infants baptized for many centuries?" The reply is—*With the forms used by the ancient church for adult believers!*

In the next chapter, the entire contrast between the baptism of the Reformers and that of the Fathers, will be clearly exhibited. This point is only noticed at present, to account for my giving as the ceremonies associated with infant baptism identically those which are used in the baptism of adults. There was no separate formula in the ancient church.

An account of the administration of baptism in the Greek

church (on the authority of Dr. King,* though greatly abridged, will give the reader some idea of ancient infant baptism.

"On the eighth day after its birth the child should regularly be carried to church to receive its name. On the fortieth the mother should attend the church to be purified, and carry the child again to be presented. . . . . After this follows another service, that of making him a catechumen; but for this no time is prescribed, since it may be supposed to have depended on the progress the party made in the knowledge of the christian doctrines in order to qualify himself for it. This ceremony consists chiefly in exorcising and renouncing the evil spirit; as it was imagined in the times when the service was composed, that every person was possessed by unclean spirits till he was regenerated by baptism. . . . . Next in order comes baptism properly so called, in which the Greek church uniformly practises trine immersion, undoubtedly the most primitive manner;† which was first changed for one immersion in Spain, in opposition to the Arians established there."

"*Initiating a Catechumen.*

"The priest then turns the catechumen‡ to the west, and saith: Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, all his angels, and all his service, and his pomps?

"The catechumen then answereth, or his sponsor if it be *a pagan* or *a child*, and saith: I do renounce.

"[Question asked and answered three times.]

* Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia, by Dr. J. G. King, Fellow of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, and Chaplain to the British Factory at St. Petersburg. London, 1772.

† Very *ancient*—more so than infant baptism; and yet *not* apostolic.

‡ The babe is always regarded and treated as a catechumen, his sponsor answering for him.

"PRIEST. Hast thou renounced the devil?

"CATECHUMEN. I have renounced.

"PRIEST. Blow and spit upon him—[which he does]; and the priest then turns him to the east, holding his hands down, and saith to him: Art thou joined to Christ?

"CATECHUMEN. I am joined.

"PRIEST. Hast thou been joined unto Christ?

"CATECHUMEN. I have been joined.

"PRIEST. Dost thou believe in him?

"CATECHUMEN. I believe in him as the living God: [and then repeats the creed.]

"PRIEST. Hast thou been joined unto Christ?

"CATECHUMEN. I have been joined.

"PRIEST. Worship him.

"CATECHUMEN. [Bowing] I worship the Father, &c.

"Concludes with the blessing and prayer.

"*Office of Baptism.*

"After various prayers, &c. the priest saith: Be present, therefore, O merciful King, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost sanctify this water, &c. Then he dips his finger in the water and signs three times, and blows upon it, saying, Let every adverse power be confounded under the sign of the cross. The priest then blows thrice into the vessel of oil, and signs it thrice with the sign of the cross.

"After prayer—

"The priest sings hallelujah! thrice with the people, and pours the oil on the top of the water, making three crosses with it.

"The person to be baptized is then presented; the priest takes some of the oil with two fingers, and makes the sign of the cross on his forehead, on his breast, and betwixt his shoulders, and on his ears, hands and feet.

"After the whole body is thus anointed, the priest baptizes him, holding him upright, and bowing his face towards the east. 'In the name of the Father, *Amen*, [first immersion] and of the Son, *Amen*, [second immersion] and of the Holy Ghost, *Amen*, [third immersion] now and for ever, even unto ages of ages.'

"The priest having wiped his hands, and with the people sung Psalm xxxii.—

"Puts on the baptized person's garments, saying—

"N., the servant of God, is clothed with the garment of righteousness, &c.

"*Confirmation immediately after Baptism.*

"As soon as baptism was performed, the subjects of it were immediately brought to the bishop, if he was present, to receive his benediction, with prayer for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them. With this prayer was joined *imposition of hands*, and usually also a second unction called *chrism*, and the sign of the cross, *the seal of the Lord*. The rite is more frequently mentioned in the ancient writers by one or the other of the above names, than by that of *confirmation*.

"If the bishop were present, confirmation always immediately followed baptism. So says Tertullian:—'As soon as they came out of the water they were anointed with the oil of consecration, and then received imposition of hands, inviting down the Holy Spirit by that benediction.' To the same effect Cyril of Jerusalem, the Apostolic Constitutions, Ambrose, Optatus, and other writers. It was accordingly administered to infants as well as adults—which is clear from various passages of ancient writers, as well as from the custom, which prevailed for several centuries in the church, of giving the eucharist to infants, the participation of which, by

the ordinary rules of the church, was always to be preceded by confirmation."*

The subject of sponsors answering in the name of the child requires a little more attention. "Two things, indeed, were anciently required of sponsors," says Mr. Bingham, "as their proper duty. 1. To answer in their names [that is, of the infants] to all the interrogatories of baptism. If any one thinks these promises related only to what the sponsors promised for themselves, and not in the name of the child, he may be informed more clearly from others [than Tertullian]. Gennadius tells us these promises for infants, and such as were incapable of learning, were made after *the usual manner* of interrogatories in baptism. St. Augustine† more particularly acquaints us with the form then used, which was, 'Doth this child believe in God? Doth he turn to God?' which is the same as renouncing the devil, and making a covenant with Christ. And he professes he would not admit any child to baptism, whose sponsor he had reason to believe did not make these promises and responses sincerely for him. Of the form and practice, then, there is no doubt; only it seemed a great difficulty to Bishop Boniface, and as such he proposed it to St. Augustine, 'how it could be said *with truth* that a child believed, or renounced the devil, or turned to God, who had no thought or apprehension of those things, or, if any, yet secret and unknown to us. . . . . Since no one, therefore, would promise either for his future morals or his present thoughts, how is it that, when parents, as sponsors, present their children in baptism, they answer and say, the children do those things which that age does not so much as think of.' To this Augustine answers, 'That the child is only said to believe because he

* Henry's Compendium of Christian Antiquities, p. 130.—This is a valuable abridgment of Mr. Bingham's larger work.

† Aug. Epist. xxiii. ad Bonifac.

receives the sacrament of faith and conversion,* which entitles him to the name of a believer: for the sacraments, because of the resemblance between them and the things represented by them, do carry the name of the things represented. . . . And upon this account, when it is answered that an infant believes who has not yet any knowledge or habit of faith, the meaning of the answer is that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith, and is converted to God because of the sacrament of conversion; for these answers appertain to the celebration of the sacraments.'"†

SECTION II.

INFANT COMMUNION.

Such are the follies which have been introduced in lieu of the gloriously simple ordinance of baptism, as instituted by our Lord and practised by his apostles. It will be observed, however, that, whatever childish additions the ancients made to baptism, *they never separated it from the Lord's supper*. Of this I shall adduce the most abundant proof. For ten centuries the idea of withholding one sacrament from those who had partaken of the other, even in the case of infants, had certainly never been conceived. This was reserved for the most corrupt age of the church of Rome, when the doctrine of transubstantiation was "come to the full;" so that the *reformers have followed the corruptions of the ancient church in giving baptism to infants*, and *the cor-*

* But the sponsor declares the child believes *before* he receives "the sacrament of faith." The fact is, infant baptism is contrary to truth from beginning to end.

† Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, vol. iii. p. 241.

ruptions of modern Romanism in withholding from them the Lord's supper—and then, in the adoption of this compound of error (with the facts of history staring us in the face), they ask Baptists to follow them, and are far from pleased at our obstinate refusal. No, brethren! "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder." When pædobaptists give their children *both* ordinances they will be consistent; but, while *they* withhold the Lord's supper from their children, let them not complain of *others* withholding baptism. The fact that, wherever in the scriptures or in the ancient church baptism is found, there the other ordinance is found in connexion with it, is in itself enough to overthrow all the arguments for the practice of infant baptism, when used by those who do not practise infant communion. Whatever arguments will sustain the one will be equally available for the other. It is astonishing that Dr. Woods, and other professors of ecclesiastical history, even in their lectures to their students, do not bring forward this important fact, and fairly meet it.* Church of England writers are much more candid and fearless. Mr. Bingham, the prebendary of Chichester, in his valuable work on Christian Antiquities, has brought forward evidence which places this matter beyond a doubt.†

"Nor was this [confirmation after baptism] only true with respect to adult persons," says Mr. Bingham,‡ "but also with respect to infants, who were anciently confirmed by imposition of hands and the holy chrism, or unction, as soon

* Dr. Miller, indeed, has done his best; but in vain. Dr. Woods has quoted the testimony of Cyprian and other Fathers in favor of infant baptism, and has added several pages of *comment*, but could not make room for this important *fact*.

† Zornius also has collected a mass of evidence, to which the curious in ecclesiastical antiquities are referred.

‡ Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, Book XII. ch. i vol. iii. p. 288.

as they were baptized; which will, perhaps, seem a paradox to many who look no further than to the practice of later ages: but it may be undeniably learned in two ways; first, from the plain testimonies of the ancients, declaring it so to be; and secondly, from *that known custom and usage of the church in giving the eucharist to infants*, which ordinarily pre-supposes their confirmation."

As to the testimony of the ancients, nothing can be plainer than that of Gennadius:—"If they be infants that are baptized, let those that present them for baptism answer for them according to the common way of baptizing, and then let them be confirmed by imposition of hands and chrism, and so be admitted to partake of the eucharist."*

Pope Gregory, both in his Sacramentarium and his Epistles,† and subsequently all the writers in the eighth and ninth centuries, notice the same facts. Alcuin, who wrote about offices of the church in the time of Charles the Great, says —"After an infant is baptized, he is to be clothed and brought to the bishop, if he be present, who is to confirm him with chrism, and give him the communion; and if the bishop be not present, the presbyter shall communicate him."‡

Baluzius refers to two ancient manuscript Pontificals of the ninth century, where this order for confirming infants is continued;§ and to an epistle of Jesse, Bishop of Amiens, where the bishop is directed, after the baptism of the infant, "to confirm him, and communicate him with the body and blood of Christ."‖

Cyprian also refers to it as a common practice. Speaking of little children taken in their parents' arms when they went

* Gennad. de Dogmat. Eccles. cap. liii.

† Gregor. lib. iii. ep. 9. Bib. Patr.

‡ Alcuin de Offic. tom. x. p. 259.

§ Baluz. Not. in Regino, lib. i. c. 69.

‖ Jesse Ambianensis Ep. de Ordine Bapt. ibid.

to participate in the pagan sacrifices, he represents them as saying, "Neither did we leave the bread and cup of the Lord to run of our own accord to the profaned contagions."* In another place he relates the following ridiculous story, to make those that had revolted to idolatry in the late persecution at Carthage, sensible of their guilt and of God's wrath; and to convince them that they ought not, without due confession and penitence, to approach the holy table.†

"I'll tell you what happened in my own presence. The parents of a certain little girl, running out of town in a flight, had almost forgot to take any care of the child, whom they left in the keeping of a nurse. The nurse had carried her to the magistrates; they, because she was too little to eat flesh, gave her to eat, before the idols, some of the bread, mixed with wine, which had been left of the sacrifice of those wretches. Since that time her mother took her home; but she was no more capable of declaring and telling the crime committed, than she had been before of understanding or hindering it. So it happened that, once when I was administering, her mother, ignorant of what had been done, brought her along with her. But the girl, being among the saints, could not, with any quietness, hear the prayers said; but sometimes fell into weeping, and sometimes into convulsions, with the uneasiness of her mind; and her ignorant soul, as under a rack, declared, by such tokens as it could, the conscience of the fact in those tender years. And when the service was ended, and the deacon went to give the cup to those that were present, and the others received it, and her turn came, the girl, by a divine instinct, turned away her face, shut her mouth, and refused the cup; but yet the deacon persisted, *and put into her mouth, though she refused it, some of the sacrament of the cup.* Then followed retch-

* Cypr. de Lapsis, p. 125.

† Lib. de Lapsis, circa medium.

ings and vomitings, the eucharist could not stay in her polluted mouth and body; the drink consecrated in our Lord's blood burst out again from her defiled bowels! Such is the power, such the mercy of our Lord! The secrets of darkness were discovered by his light! Even unknown sins could not deceive the priest of God! This happened in the case of an infant, who was, by reason of her age, incapable of declaring the crime which another had acted upon her."*

The author of the Apostolical Constitutions, in his invitation to communion, bids mothers bring their children with them; and, describing the order of the service, says—"First let the bishops receive, then the presbyters, &c.; among the women, the deaconesses, virgins, and widows; *after that the children*, and then all the people in order."†

Augustine not only refers to the practice in Cyprian's time, but also intimates quite clearly that partaking of the eucharist was necessary for infants, in order to obtain eternal life; resting upon the declaration of our Saviour, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."‡ "And dare any one be so bold as to say," is the comment of Augustine, "that this sentence does not appertain to little children, or that they can have life without partaking of this body and this blood?"§ He reiterates this sentiment in his controversy with the Pelagians, as well as in his other writings. Pope Innocent, his contempo-

* The reader cannot well fail to observe a striking resemblance between this ancient advocate of infant baptism and his successor, the professor at Princeton—the extent to which they venture to test the confidence of their respective charges in their veracity. How enviable the state of those "quiet people," as Augustine calls them, who can believe without a faltering doubt the assurances of St. Cyprian and Dr. Miller!

† Const. lib. viii. cap. 13.

‡ Zornii Historia Eucharistiæ Infantium, cap. vii. p. 88.

§ Aug. de Peccator. Merit. lib. i. cap. 20.

rary, appears to have concurred in it, for he pleads, in his Epistles to Augustine, for the necessity of baptizing infants, from the necessity of their eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man.*

This practice continued in the church for many ages. In Gregory's Sacramentarum,† there is an order "that infants should be allowed to suck the breast before the holy communion, if necessity so required." The old Ordo Romanus of the ninth century directs, "that infants, after they are baptized, should not eat any food, nor suck the breast, without great necessity, till they had communicated in the sacrament of the body of Christ."

Salmasius observes—"It was the invariable practice to give the catechumens the eucharist immediately after they were baptized. Afterwards the opinion prevailed that no one could be saved unless he were baptized, so the custom of baptizing infants was introduced. And because to adult catechumens as soon as they were baptized, no space of time intervening, the eucharist was given, so, after pædobaptism was introduced this was also done in the case of infants."‡

Bossuet affirms—"The church has always believed, and still believes, that infants are capable of receiving the eucharist as well as baptism, and *finds no more obstacle* to their communion in the words of St. Paul, '*Let a man examine himself and so let him eat*,' than *she finds to their baptism in these words of our Lord*, '*Teach and baptize*.' But, as she knew the eucharist could not be absolutely necessary to their salvation after they had received the full remission of sins in baptism, she believed it was a matter of

* Innoc. Epist. 93, inter. Epist. Augustin.

† Gregor. Sacr. in Offic. Sabbat. Sanct.

‡ Salmasius (a learned Catholic writer) in Libro de Transubstantione, contra H. Grotium, p. 495.

discipline to give or not give the communion in this age; thus it is that, during the first eleven or twelve centuries, she, for good reasons, gave it; and, for other reasons, equally good, has since then ceased to give it."*

It forms an interesting, though minute, point of investigation for the ecclesiastical historian, to ascertain with certainty the precise circumstances which led, in the Romish church, to the withholding of the eucharist from infants. There appears to me, however, little room to doubt, that, when the elements came to be regarded as the real body of Christ, great difficulty occurred because the babes would sometimes spit out the sop (for the bread was sopped in the wine), to the great consternation of devout believers in transubstantiation. To obviate this, the bread was taken away from the infant, and the priest dipped his finger in the cup and put it in the babe's mouth, as is the practice in the Greek church to this day. But, when the cup came to be taken from the laity in the Romish church, then the babes were deprived of the whole eucharist. Will my esteemed friends excuse my asking, whether sprinkling a few drops in the face of a babe is more like New Testament baptism, than putting the wine-imbued finger of the priest in the child's mouth is like the New Testament administration of the Lord's supper?

When the council of Trent abrogated the practice entirely, it gave the Protestants of that day an admirable opportunity to attack the favorite principle of the Catholics, "that the true church never changed." In fact, the *abandoning* of this practice is as fatal to the great principle of popery—the infallibility of the church—as the *existence* of the practice from the third to the twelfth century is to protestant infant baptism. There cannot be a particle of evidence produced that, for more than one thousand years, the two ordinances were ever separated; and the responsibility which rests upon

* Bossuet, Traité de Communion sous les deux Espèces, part i. p. 3.

those who continue to separate what God has joined together, and thus to assume the position of legislators, instead of obedient subjects of Zion's King, is such as should make the violators of the order of Christ's house seriously reflect, and cheerfully return to the good old way.

CHAPTER X.

THREE BAPTISMS.—BAPTISM OF THE APOSTLES, OF THE FATHERS, AND OF THE REFORMERS.

SECTION I.

APOSTOLIC BAPTISM.

In preceding chapters it has been clearly proved, that infant baptism has neither the command of Christ, the practice of the apostles, nor the sanction of the ancient church during the first two centuries.

It is not necessary here to enter into a description of apostolic baptism. It has already been substantiated beyond any possibility of doubt, by the testimony of evangelists, apostles, fathers, and modern paedobaptist divines, that *apostolic baptism* required repentance, faith, and desire for baptism, *in the person baptized* (not in his proxy); and that that baptism was designed to indicate the participation of the individual baptized in the glorious privileges purchased by the death, and secured by the resurrection, of Jesus Christ —even the remission of his sins, the regeneration of his soul, and his ingrafting, *by faith*, into the body of Christ.

Those who have attentively perused the preceding pages, cannot fail to have formed some general idea of baptism as practised by the Fathers of the third and following centuries. It is desirable, however, in order that the reader may perceive the entire contrast between their baptism and that of the apostles on the one hand, and that of the reformers on

the other, that the subject should be presented collectively and distinctly.

In this chapter I shall make it manifest that infant baptism, as now practised in the reformed churches (the Episcopal churches of England and America excepted), is *a species of baptism utterly unknown to the world till the time of John Calvin*, and as distinct from the baptism of the Fathers as theirs was from that of the apostles.

SECTION II.

BAPTISM OF THE FATHERS.

The formula of the Greek church, as to its baptismal service, has already been inserted in a preceding chapter. If the reader refers to that ritual, he will find that he has before him the baptismal service of the ancient church, as used both in the case of adults and infants, with a few additional superstitious forms introduced at a later period.

That the light in which the ancient church viewed the ordinance of baptism may be still more evident, I will give a few quotations from the Fathers, in addition to those already presented in the preceding chapters.

Basil.—"Baptism is the setting free of the captive: the death of sin; the regeneration of the soul; an indelible stamp; the way to heaven; the grace of adoption."*

Ambrose.—"What else do we daily teach respecting this sacrament, but that in it sins are drowned and error destroyed?"† Again—"Who regenerated you of the water and the Holy Spirit, remitted your sins, and anointed you to

* Basil, in Sanct. Baptism.

† Ambrose, de iis qui myst. init. cap. iii. tom. 6.

eternal life?" Once more—"Since in baptism there is the similitude of death when you are immersed, emerging there is also the similitude of resurrection."*

CHRYSOSTOM.—"Baptism is the sign of faith."† In another place he calls baptism "the cleansing of the soul by the Holy Spirit."‡

AUGUSTINE.—"As you cleanse the body in water, so the Spirit washes the soul from sin."§ Again—"That [the baptismal water] washes the body, and signifies what is done in the soul."‖ "The visible sacraments are the signs of invisible realities, as words are of things."¶ "Made a member of Christ in baptism."**

Episcopal Churches of England and America.

It will be clearly perceived that the compilers of the Liturgy of the church of England have followed, in their office of baptism, both the forms and the ideas of the Fathers.

"Dearly beloved, ye have brought this child here to be baptized; ye have prayed that our Lord Jesus Christ would vouchsafe to receive him, to release him from sin, to sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, to give him the kingdom of heaven and everlasting life. Ye have heard, also, that our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised, in his gospel, to grant all these things that ye have prayed for; which promise he, for his part, will most surely keep and perform. Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, this infant must also faithfully, for his part, promise by you that are his sureties (until he come of age to take it upon himself), that he will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy Word, and obediently keep his commandments.

"*The Minister shall then demand of the Sponsors as follows: the questions being considered as addressed to them severally, and the answers to be made accordingly:*

"I demand therefore,

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* De Sacram. lib. iii. cap. 1.

† Hom. v. in Matt. ‡ Hom. vii. in 1 Cor.

§ Augustine, Lib. Quæst. X. Novo Test. cap. lix. tom. iv.

‖ Tract vi. in Epist. Joan. tom ix.

¶ De Civitat. Dei, lib. x. cap. 9. ** Sermones ad Infantes.

"Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?

"*Ans.* I renounce them all; and, by God's help, will endeavor not to follow nor be led by them.*

"*Minis.* Dost thou believe all the articles of the christian faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed?

"*Ans.* I do.

"*Minis.* Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

"*Ans.* That is my desire.

"*Minis.* Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

"*Ans.* I will, by God's help.

"Regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that this child, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

"*And then, naming it after them, he shall dip it in the water discreetly, or shall pour water upon it, saying,*

"N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

"*Then the Minister shall say,*

"We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign† him with the sign of the Cross; in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end. *Amen.*

"Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's church; let us give thanks unto Almighty God for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning.

"We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy church.

"Forasmuch as this child hath promised by you his sureties, to re-

* In this and the succeeding replies, it is evident the child is considered as actually speaking, though by its sponsors.

† "Here the minister shall make a cross upon the child's forehead."

nounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember, that it is your parts and duties to see that this infant be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he hath here made by you."

The reader has now clearly before him the universal idea of infant baptism as held by the ancient (*not apostolic*) church, that in baptism the infant "renounces the devil," "believes all the articles of the christian faith," and pledges himself "obediently to keep God's holy will and commandments." What more does a baptist ask as a prerequisite to baptism, than to be satisfied that this is really the state of mind of the person desiring to be baptized? But, again, it will be observed, that the idea of the "washing away of sin" by the sanctification of the water is distinctly preserved; and that, after baptism, the child is declared to be regenerate, and "grafted into the body of Christ's church." The doctrinal difference between the churches in view and the Baptists on this point, is simply this; that the former hold the blessings to be *conferred in* baptism, the latter hold them to be *signified by* baptism.

Let us now refer to the "Catechism to be learned by every person before he be brought to be confirmed by the bishop."

"*Quest.* Who gave you this name?

"*Ans.* My sponsors in my baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

"*Quest.* What did your sponsors then for you?

"*Ans.* They did promise and vow three things in my name: First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh: secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the christian faith: and, thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

I stated in a former chapter, that the episcopal service required the sponsor to *promise* that the child *should renounce* the devil, &c., while in fact the child does *then* renounce, believe, and declare his intention to obey, by his sponsor:

yet the catechism is worded as though the sponsor had only promised that the child *should do* these things. Strange indeed, that, when the minister asks the sponsor, "Wilt *thou* be baptized in this faith?" and he replies, "That is *my* desire," the *babe* should then be baptized, instead of the person who has asked baptism!

In this catechism the child is taught that he was regenerated in his baptism; and, as no man is regenerated twice, it is, of course, improper to speak to him, though ever so wicked, of the necessity of being "born *again*," or "born of *the Spirit*." And this the great bulk of the clergy of the church of England (with Dr. Mant and Dr. Laurence at their head) strenuously maintain against the evangelical party; and certainly they have the formula and the belief of the ancient church on their side.

There is one more point in this catechism which requires special notice. It is the following:—

"*Quest.* Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do as they have promised for thee?

"*Ans.* Yes, verily; and by God's help, so I will."

Here the youth is taught to say that he was "bound" to "believe and do as they have promised." I must be permitted to speak plainly, and to observe, that it is impossible any infant can be bound, as a *moral being*, by any promise made in its behalf. Would any man deem himself bound by a promise made for him while he was asleep, or without his knowledge and consent? This is representing the religion of Jesus as contrary to the dictates of common sense, and to the very first principles of moral obligation. That this unhappy delusion has been a source of immense mischief to the church and the world, will appear in the closing chapter.

SECTION III.

BAPTISM OF THE REFORMERS.

I SHALL commence the presentation of reformed baptism by the practice of the

American Reformed Dutch Church.

"The principal parts of the doctrine of holy baptism are these three. First, That we, with our children, are conceived and born in sin, and therefore are children of wrath, in so much that we cannot enter into the kingdom of God except we be born again. This the dipping in, or sprinkling with, water teaches us, whereby the impurity of our souls is signified, and we admonished to loathe and humble ourselves before God, and seek for our purification and salvation without ourselves.

Secondly. Holy baptism witnesseth and sealeth unto us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. Therefore, we are baptized *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

"Thirdly. Whereas in all covenants there are contained two parts, therefore are we by God, through baptism, admonished of and obliged unto new obedience, namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that we trust in him, and love him with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our mind, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and holy life.

"And, although our young children do not understand these things, we may not, therefore, exclude them from baptism; for, as they are, without their knowledge, partakers of the condemnation in Adam, so are they again received unto grace in Christ; as God speaketh unto Abraham, the father of all the faithful, and therefore unto us and our children.—Gen. xvii. 7.

"*Thanksgiving.*

"Almighty God and merciful Father, we thank and praise thee that thou hast forgiven us, and our children, all our sins, through the blood of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, and received us, through thy Holy Spirit, as members of thy only begotten Son, and adopted us to be thy children, and sealed and confirmed the same unto us by holy baptism. We beseech thee, through the same Son of thy love, that thou wilt be pleased always to govern these baptized children by thy Holy Spirit."

The reader will now begin to perceive the *inconsistency* of pædobaptist churches. The ancient church (and the Episcopal church follows her,) maintained that a babe is made a "member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," *by* baptism; the Lutheran (and the Presbyterian, or Calvinistic, it will be seen, accords in this view) maintains that, "*as members* of his church, they ought to be baptized." The ancient and episcopal churches assert that children must be baptized because they are *not* members of Christ, and the reformed churches* because they *are!* Is it unreasonable to ask our pædobaptist friends to remove this gross contradiction, lying at the very foundation of their baptism, before they ask us to follow in their steps?

How sensible men can declare that, "when we are baptized in the name of the Son, the Son sealeth unto us that he doth wash us in his blood from all our sins;" and that, "in like manner, when we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost assures us by the holy sacrament that he will dwell in us;" and then apply an ordinance of *such signification* to babes, must be matter of surprise to a reflecting mind. Our esteemed brethren are in a hard case, to make out the baptism of believers and of babes to be "*one* baptism." It evidently puzzled the gigantic mind of Luther himself. He held on to the scriptural idea that faith and baptism must not be separated. What a marsh of confusion that good and great man is plunged into, by the attempt to maintain that "the *children believe in baptism itself*," will be apparent from the following extract:—"Therefore we here say and conclude, that the children believe in baptism itself, and have their own faith, which

* As far as baptism is concerned, the English and American episcopal churches must be regarded, not as *reformed*, but as following the *ancient* church.

God works in them through the intercession and hearty offering of the sponsors, in the faith of the christian church. And that is what we call the power of another's faith; not that any one can be saved through that, but that he thereby (that is, through another's intercession and aid) may obtain a faith of his own from God, by which he is saved. . . . . Their own faith, in which they are baptized and believe for themselves."* Nothing can be more evident, than that it must be a bad cause which confuses such a mind as Luther's.

"Some modern divines," says Dr. Wall, "especially of the Lutherans, have gone further, and do maintain that infants *have faith*, and do believe after a certain manner; but not in the same way and manner that adult people do, whose faith comes by hearing, thought, meditation, understanding, &c., for they grant that infants have none of these; and *what sort of faith it is that they have cannot (as they confess) be explained.*"

A late philosophical divine of the church of Rome has outdone all. He has made us acquainted with the mechanism by which original sin is formed in the brain of an infant before it is born, and shown how at baptism it is rectified. It is decidedly the earliest germ of phrenological science which the page of history affords. "The mother has a sinful inclination and love to the world, pleasure, &c. There are tracks or traces in her brain running all this way. The child has by sympathy the same traces bred in his brain; so he has, before he is born, corrupt inclinations, and is a sinner." The difficulty is, how is this rectified at baptism? For this he supposes the child to have, at the time of baptism, one "strong actual motion of love to God;" and he says, "One single instant is sufficient for the exercise of that act of love; and concupiscence is, as it were, mortified

* Works of Martin Luther, edited by Walch. Wittenberg. vol. xi. pp. 667–672.

that moment." But the strangest thing of all is this divine's affirmation—"It should *not* be thought strange that I suppose it possible for children to love God with a love of choice at the time of their baptism!"*

Those who will reflect on the different degrees of irrationality associated with the defence of infant baptism in its various forms, will rejoice to be free from *any share* in these absurdities.

Presbyterian Church.—Directions for Baptism.

"III. After previous notice is given to the minister, the child to be baptized is to be presented by one or both the parents, signifying their desire that the child may be baptized.

"IV. Before baptism let the minister use some words of instruction respecting the institution, nature, use, and ends of this ordinance; showing,

"That it is instituted by Christ; that it is a seal of the righteousness of faith; that the seed of the faithful have no less a right to this ordinance, under the gospel, than the seed of Abraham to circumcision, under the Old Testament; that Christ commanded all nations to be baptized; that he blessed little children, declaring that of such is the kingdom of heaven; that children are federally holy, and therefore ought to be baptized; that we are by nature sinful, guilty, and polluted, and have need of cleansing by the blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God.

"The minister is also to exhort the parents to the careful performance of their duty.

"V. Then the minister is to pray for a blessing to attend this ordinance; after which, calling the child by its name, he shall say, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.'

"As he pronounces these words, he is to baptize the child with water, by pouring or sprinkling it on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony; and the whole shall be concluded with prayer."

Here the *premises* affirmed are that baptism is the "seal of the righteousness *of faith;*" and the *conclusion* is that

* Malbranch. Search, Illustrations of, ch. vii. Part I. Book ii.

babes, who certainly have *no faith* (for all Luther has said), are entitled to it. Again—what a most extraordinary association of ideas is in this phrase, "children are federally *holy*, and *therefore* ought to be baptized;" yet, "we are *by nature sinful, guilty, and polluted!*" "Federally holy," and yet "by nature sinful!" It will be observed that, in this form, which is taken from the Directory for Worship, there is but little said on the subject of baptism. This deficiency, however, may be supplied by referring to the Confession of Faith.

"Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life. . . . .

"II. The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel lawfully called thereunto.

"III. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.

"IV. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents, are to be baptized.

"V. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.

"VI. The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time."

In this Confession, it is declared that baptism is a sign of the individual's "grafting into Christ—regeneration—remis-

sion of sins—his giving up unto God through Jesus Christ;" and yet it is declared that "infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized." It will be replied, "Yes, infants of believers *are* grafted into Christ, and are therefore entitled to the seal." Strange doctrine this, indeed, for a *Calvinist*, who believes (as I most cordially do) that all who are "grafted into Christ" will be found in him at the last day!* But, waiving the question of the consistency of this position, of what *other* blessings does the Confession say baptism is the sign of possession?—*regeneration, remission of sin*, and *giving up to Christ*. Has an infant *these* also? It is not pretended that a child is *already regenerated* before baptism; and, if he is regenerated neither *before* nor *in* baptism, why should that *sign* be administered at all? The apostles baptized individuals because they *were already regenerated;* the ancient and episcopal churches baptize infants that they *may be regenerated* by baptism: but why do Presbyterians baptize them? Because "the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to *such* (whether of age or infants) *as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will*, in his appointed time." That is, *all* babes are to be baptized and brought into the "visible church," and to partake of "the sign and seal of the covenant of grace," because "SUCH *as that grace belongeth unto*" will receive it "in his appointed time." A "covenant of grace," an "ingrafting into Christ," a "regeneration," signified in *all*, while the "grace promised" is only really "exhibited and conferred on *such* as that grace belongeth unto, accord-

* I repudiate, however, with feelings of strong aversion, not to say disgust, Calvin's doctrine of some being "foreordained to everlasting death;" a doctrine pardonable, indeed, even in a great man, living in the age in which Calvin's lot was cast, but for the perpetuation of which ecclesiastical bodies in the present day are utterly inexcusable.

ing to the counsel of God's own will!" Would it not be as well to *wait* till it could be hopefully ascertained on whom the grace promised was really "exhibited and conferred," before the *sign* of that exhibition and bestowment is given? Calvin had a strong belief that one portion of mankind were destined to be the companions of the devil, and this sentiment is distinctly affirmed in this same Confession of Faith —"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, *and others forordained to everlasting death.*" Infants "in the covenant of grace"—"ingrafted into Christ"—"federally holy," and therefore baptized, and yet forordained to everlasting death! What a mass of revolting inconsistency! It would seem impossible that the mind of Calvin could become so entangled; yet, as will be seen from the following passage, selected from an original copy of his Institutes by Henry, in his Life of Calvin, he maintains that all the children of believers are "heirs of God!"

"To remove all doubt, this principle must always be maintained—that baptism is not conferred upon infants in order that they may become the children and heirs of God, but, because they are already in that rank and position with God, the grace of adoption is sealed in their flesh by baptism; *otherwise anabaptists would be right in excluding them from baptism.*—Alioqui recte eos a baptismo arcerent anabaptistæ."*

Would it not be better to admit that "anabaptists" *are* "right," than to maintain that "heirs of God" are "forordained to everlasting death?"

Dr. Miller feels very sore, like Augustine in his letter to Boniface, that Baptists should object to baptizing those who have not faith. He complains bitterly, that "this objec-

* Calvin's Institutes, 2d edition, Strasburg, A. D. 1532. Quoted in Henry's Life of Calvin. Hamburg, 1835, vol. i. p. 325.

tion is urged with unceasing confidence, and not seldom accompanied with a sneer, or even ridicule, at the idea of applying a covenant seal to those who are incapable of either understanding, or giving their consent to the transaction. It is really, my friends, enough to make one shudder, to think how often and how unceremoniously language of this kind is employed, by those who acknowledge that *infants of eight days old* were once, and that by express divine appointment, made the subjects of circumcision!

"After all, the whole weight of the objection in this case is founded on an entire forgetfulness of the main principle of *the* pædobaptist system.* It is forgotten that, in every case of infant baptism, faith is required, and, if the parents be sincere, is actually exercised. *But it is required of the parents, not of the children.* So that, if the parent really present his child in faith, the spirit of the ordinance is entirely met and answered.

"'Where,' say our Baptist brethren, 'is the *benefit* of it? What good can a little 'sprinkling with water' do a helpless, unconscious babe?'—Is there no advantage in solemnly dedicating our children to God by an appropriate rite of his own appointment? Is there no advantage in formally binding ourselves, by covenant engagements, to bring up our offspring 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!' Is there no advantage in publicly ratifying the connexion of our children, as well as ourselves, with the visible church, and, as it were, binding them to an alliance with the God of their fathers? Is it a step of no value to our children themselves, to be brought, by a divinely appointed ordinance, into the bosom and to the notice, the maternal attentions and the prayers, of

* Of *what* pædobaptist system? Is it *ignorance* or *heedlessness* that leads Dr. Miller into this gross misrepresentation? The doctrine he alludes to is *not* the main principle of the "pædobaptist system" of the Fathers, of the Episcopal church, or even of Luther.

the church, 'the mother of us all?' . . . . Verily, my dear friends, those who refuse or neglect the baptism of their children, not only sin against Christ by disobeying his solemn command, but they also deprive both themselves and their children of great benefits."*

As to the advantage which results to *parents* from the baptism of their babes, it is so utterly foreign to any thing which the scriptures say respecting baptism, that I shall not waste a word on the subject. The advantage this celebrated leader of old-school Presbyterianism maintains *infants* to derive, is worth a moment's notice: it is that of "publicly ratifying their connexion with the visible church, and, as it were, binding them to an alliance with the God of their fathers." They are brought, also, into the "bosom," "the notice," the "maternal attentions," and "the prayers of the church." Poor, pitiable, *unbaptized* children! The *church* may not *pray* for *you*: you must receive no *attentions* from the church of God, because *your parents are not believers*, and therefore *you cannot be baptized!* But you will say, "As we have no christian instruction, no pious 'attention' at home, we need the more from 'the church.'" The Lord be praised, there are yet those churches who can give the fondest spiritual attention to the children of unbelievers, and bear them in their prayers in faith before God, though they have not been baptized into the covenant of grace!†

* Miller on Infant Baptism, pp. 39–42.

† I would be far from intimating that the practice of Presbyterians in general is in accordance with this argument of Dr. Miller. I rejoice to know that Dr. M. is as far from *historic truth* in this stage of his argument, as in many other portions of it: but this is inevitably clear, that, if these good brethren do *as much* for *unbaptized* as for *baptized* children, the latter have no advantage; and thus their christian benevolence annihilates the only *practical* argument in favor of infant baptism.

This is another great point of distinction between the *institution* of Calvin and the *corrupted baptism* of the Fathers; as the latter held baptism essential to salvation, they would baptize even children found in the street. Here was, at least, apparent benevolence, and expansion of soul. It was reserved for Calvin to corrupt baptism far more than even Popery had done, by directing that infants must lose the benefit of being "sealed into the covenant of grace," unless at least one of the parents would join his church. How this doctrine may be applied to church aggrandizement is apparent to all.

Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.

"*The Ministration of Baptism to Infants.*

"The minister, coming to the font, which is to be filled with pure water, shall use the following, or some other exhortation suitable to this sacred office:—

"Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that, of his bounteous mercy, he will grant to this child that thing which by nature he cannot have; that he may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and be received into Christ's holy church, and be made a lively member of the same.

"*Then shall the minister say,* Let us pray.

"Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water; and also didst safely lead the children of Israel, thy people, through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy baptism: and, by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water for this holy sacrament: we beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt look upon this child; wash him and sanctify him with the

Holy Ghost; that he, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's church, and, being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in love, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life; there to reign with thee, world without end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

"O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in this child may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in him. *Amen.*

"Almighty, ever-living God, whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his most precious side both water and blood, and gave commandment to his disciples that they should go teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water for this holy sacrament; and grant that this child, now to be baptized, may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

"*Then the minister shall take the child into his hands, and say to the friends of the child,* Name this child.

"*And then, naming it after them, he shall sprinkle or pour water upon it, or, if desired, immerse it in water, saying,*

"N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*

"*Then shall be said, all kneeling,*

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

It will be perceived that, although the prayers in this service closely resemble those of the Episcopal church of England, yet, by avoiding the *thanksgiving* at the close, the Methodist is allowed to escape the assertion that the baptized child *is* "sanctified with the Holy Ghost," and "received into the ark of Christ's church," and has received "the fulness of grace;" though, in the prayer, "ever *remain* in the number of thy faithful and elect children," it is clearly intimated that the child was about to become one.

With respect to Wesleyan Methodist baptism, while its forms resemble in some measure those of the Episcopal church, the doctrinal ideas associated with it by its defenders

in that numerous and respectable body, are generally borrowed from the writings of Calvinistic divines. It is not necessary, therefore, to enter more minutely into the investigation of this ordinance as found in the Methodist church, since the authorized statements respecting it are exceedingly loose and indefinite; and since the divines of that church, who have favored the world with their views, generally concur with their Calvinistic brethren on this point.*

I may be permitted to observe, however, that, when the Discipline distinctly affirms that "the baptism of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ *in* the river Jordan, did sanctify water for this holy sacrament," it would be well for the ministers of that church to avoid exhorting their people "*not* to follow Christ in baptism;" and, as the Discipline maintains that Christ was baptized *in* Jordan, they will do well to be careful, at least, not to *print* any insinuations as to the *indelicacy* of immersion.

Did the limits of this work permit, I might insert some extracts from other confessions of the reformed churches in Europe;† but it is unnecessary, as they all proceed on the principle that children are to be baptized because they *are* "ingrafted into Christ," and rest their proof on circumcision, and on Christ's saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."

Comparison of the different Baptisms.

The reader has now ample proof before him, that, till the time of Calvin, the church, true or apostate, never entertained

* I am aware, however, that in some instances, the authority of great names in the Methodist church may be found sanctioning some of the wildest fancies of the Fathers respecting infant baptism; but, wherever fidelity will permit, it is pleasing to exercise *forbearance*.

† From a valuable work, "Corpus et Syntagma Confessionum Fidei, quæ in diversis Regnis, &c. Genevæ, 1654."

the idea of baptism without a renunciation of the devil, a profession of faith, and a desire for baptism, on the part of the individual to be baptized. It is true, that, in the time of Gregory, little children at three years old were admitted to renounce the devil—poor little dears! they knew but little how faithfully many of them would live to *serve* him—and say the creed, that they might be baptized: and in some cases *infants* were brought to the baptistery, "to be regenerated (as Gregory says) without their knowing it"—but then some one stood up for them, and declared they *did* renounce, and believe, and desire to be baptized. *The importance of faith to baptism is nowhere shown more clearly than in the baptism of infants in the ancient church*: for, as there could be no baptism without faith, and the babes themselves could not speak, the church provided a friend to come and declare for the child that he did renounce and believe! What can be greater proof of the essential necessity of faith to baptism, in the view of the ancient church, than that her priests should patronize so absurd a fiction rather than appear to dispense with it?

Let us now turn our attention to the baptism of Calvin, followed, as he has been, by Congregationalists, and even by Methodists, as well as Presbyterians and others, in his views of baptism. Is there any remission of sin, any expression of faith, any promise of future obedience, made by the child? Any *remission of sin?* No! This was too gross for Calvin to copy; but, in doing away with these fictitious professions, he *instituted* a rite of baptism, more entirely free from any resemblance to that instituted by Jesus Christ than the most corrupt form which baptism had assumed in the Roman church. The baptism practised by the ecclesiastical bodies who have received their forms from Geneva is *an institution of John Calvin*, with no more right to claim

the baptism of the *Fathers* as its pattern, than the baptism of the *New Testament*. When pædobaptists return to infant baptism as it was in the days of Augustine, or even of Cyprian, immerse their infants on a profession of their faith for the remission of sin, regard them truly as members of the church of Christ, and give them the Lord's supper that they may have eternal life, as well as a title to the kingdom of heaven—*then*, and not till then, will they be in a position to recommend that practice to others, as doing what the ancient church affirmed to be of apostolic tradition. Certain it is, that neither Augustine, nor Origen, nor any other father, ever has affirmed that sprinkling infants without some renunciation or profession being made by them, through their sponsor, was an apostolic tradition. However Dr. Woods and Dr. Miller may prove the practice of the *Episcopal church* to be *ancient*, and *reputed* to be of apostolical origin, they never can exhibit any other origin for *their* infant baptism than the "*form approved by that famous, godly, and learned man, John Calvin*"—a baptism without faith, without remission of sin, without regeneration; but only with an advantage which, as no one has ever been sensible of experiencing it, no one has ever been able intelligibly to describe. When our friends, however, set out on their return from the paths of modern innovation, to the good old paths of the early ages, I would suggest to them not to stop short till they arrive at the apostolic age; and then, according to the most learned pædobaptists, there will be an end of the controversy.

Reader, the baptism of the apostles, the baptism of the fathers, the baptism of Calvin, are all plainly before you. I will not suffer myself to suppose that, on the one hand, you will find any difficulty in discerning their marked differences, or that, on the other, you will hesitate as to your choice, and the discharge of your duty.

CHAPTER XI.

PHILOSOPHY OF BAPTISM: OR, THE MORAL TENDENCY OF BELIEVERS' AND INFANT BAPTISM COMPARED.

SECTION I.

MORAL INFLUENCE OF BAPTISM ON THE EVIDENCE AND CHARACTER OF CHRISTIANITY, AS A SYSTEM OF DIVINE ORIGIN.

GREAT is the contrast, not only between the light of the "glorious gospel" and the gross darkness of heathen systems of superstition, but also between that full development of divine truth, and the partial glimmerings of the Mosaic economy. The characteristic feature of that economy (established, indeed, for most wise and important purposes) was *ceremonial*: the distinguishing feature of the Christian dispensation is its *spirituality*. The very first element of christianity is, that it addresses truths to the *understanding*, and *that its services require the exercise of the intellect and of the heart in the individual engaged in them*. To this great principle the more corrupt churches altogether demur, and fill their religious services with *forms* and *words* of the meaning of which the participator and rehearser has no conception. Against this, however, the reformed churches protest, upon the general principle of the spirituality of the Christian dispensation; yet they retain *one* (though but one) service, which can be defended on no other principle of spi

ritual philosophy than that on which all the formal services of the Romish and Greek churches are justified by their adherents, and thus make *one exception* to their own otherwise universal rule of the *spirituality* of the Christian dispensation: this is *infant baptism.*

The union formed between *believers* and the Christian church by a baptism arising from the exercise of an enlightened mind, affords a continual succession of "witnesses" to the truth of christianity, and is undeniably a direct evidence of its adaptation to produce conviction on, and obtain the assent of, the mind and heart of man. While, indeed, it is impossible to confer honor on christianity (for the reception of christianity confers honor on the highest), yet, when we behold men who have returned from the depths of infidelity boldly confessing their conviction of its truth, and expressing their hope of personal interest in the blessings of the death and resurrection of Christ by being "baptized in the likeness of his death," *then* baptism presents a constantly renewed evidence of the truth and power of christianity. It is adapted, and, indeed, is often employed by divine grace, to extend the conviction and the blessing it expresses.

Does the baptism of an infant afford any evidence in favor of christianity? Is there any avowal of faith that has not been made before? Does the sponsor's fictitious declaration that the child "believes," &c. add any testimony to the truth of christianity? Are any of the great facts which constitute the essentials of christianity proved by the continued descent of a commemorative service, when an infant is baptized? As stated in the New Testament, the sacraments are clearly both of them commemorative, and, therefore, standing monuments of the truth of christianity. When the believer is baptized, he not only declares his faith in, but actually commemorates the death of Christ, as truly as, when subsequently partaking of the communion, he complies with the

requirement of our Saviour, "Do this in remembrance of me;" but in pædobaptism the commemorative character of that ordinance is wholly lost, and the evidence of the truth of christianity is proportionately impaired.

Is not the moral character of christianity also deeply implicated? The baptism of the believer presents an intelligent and immortal being, engaged in an act of solemn self-consecration to the service of his God and Saviour. Well may men and angels indulge in sympathetic joy! But, when we behold the babe brought forward to be introduced as a member of the church of Christ, of the high privileges and solemn duties of which he must of necessity be ignorant, does this exhibit the moral character of christianity in a favorable light before the world? What should we say of the wisdom, or even of the sound morals, of parents who should perform the rites of matrimony between a babe and a young prince? And shall a yet more indissoluble union be celebrated between a babe and the King of kings? Is the solemn pledge of devotion to Christ, implied in baptism, more proper to be made by, or for, a babe, than that of the matrimonial bond? Is it not the whole tendency of this unhappy perversion of the ordinance of baptism, to represent the church of Christ as taking possession of human beings before they have any opportunity to decide for themselves? Is not this wholly opposed to the high spiritual ground on which the church of Christ is every where placed in the scriptures, as composed only of those who have voluntarily "put off the old man with his deeds," and "have put on the new man, which is renewed after the image of" Christ Jesus? Does not this unhappy practice give too much color, to say the least, for charging christianity with *priestcraft* at its very commencement? What a powerful engine of priestcraft it naturally becomes—the doctrine that infants cannot be included in the "covenant of grace" except

at least *one* of their parents will join the church! Does it do justice to the *morality* of christianity, to represent that the spiritual and eternal interests of the babe are forfeited by the omission of a form on the part of the parent? Yea, that the actual position and relation an immortal soul sustains to God is contingent on the faith of another? This representation of baptism is contrary to the very first principle of the divine government, and tends to throw a mist over the morality of christianity, if not, indeed, to bring it into contempt.

SECTION II.

MORAL EFFECT OF BAPTISM ON THE PERSON BAPTIZED.

THE New Testament writings invariably exhibit baptism to us—

1. As a voluntary act on the part of the individual baptized. Now, every voluntary act, in proportion to its importance, has efficiency in forming the future moral character of the individual. Thus every act of obedience has decidedly a beneficial tendency on the future life of the christian; every victory he obtains over evil renders him stronger for the conflict; every instance of self-devotedness is a fresh pledge for the future. Apply these principles of spiritual philosophy to baptism as a voluntary act on the part of the believer, and is it not adapted to produce a beneficial influence over his whole future life?

2. But baptism is much more than an ordinary act of obedience. When this duty is discharged as the scriptures require, it solemnly expresses the devotion of the whole

future life to Christ. In this point of view, when freely and solemnly engaged in, it is calculated to exercise a continuous influence of the highest import, and the most strengthening kind, on the whole life of the christian. For this valuable purpose it is frequently used by the apostles, but never as binding parents, or any other person than the individual baptized. This point has already been discussed in the fourth chapter.

3. The constant remembrance of the great facts of the gospel is the main instrumentality by which the christian life is to be sustained. The baptism of the believer is adapted indelibly to impress these facts upon his mind. This Paul avails himself of, in his exhortations to the Romans and the Colossians.

4. To the believer baptism is a profession, not only of his union to Christ, but of his renunciation of, and separation from, sin. It was in this sense that Paul was exhorted by Ananias to "arise and be baptized, and wash away his sins;" that is, to manifest, by this decided and public act of renunciation, that he had for ever abandoned them. Is not this adapted to remind the christian, that to sin is contrary to the renunciation he has solemnly made?

5. To the believer baptism is also a sign that his sins are forgiven—remitted. Is this not calculated to exercise a holy influence on his future life? Is it not when the christian feels most of the joy of forgiveness that he most dreads and hates sin?

6. The promises of God are a most important portion of the spiritual strength of the christian; but their moral influence is necessarily limited by their realization, or appropriation. With baptism, as the voluntary act of a true believer, the promise of eternal salvation is connected; but only when baptism is *preceded* by *faith* on the part of the *individual baptized*. "He that *believeth and is baptized*

shall be saved." Surely that must be an error, which virtually blots from the word of God so solemn, important, and encouraging a promise as this! My heart deeply feels for those of God's children who, through following, on this point, "blind guides," are deprived of so rich a promise.

7. It is the highest delight of the true believer to keep *all* the commands of his Lord; and the fact of his having kept them has a most potent influence on his spiritual condition. "In keeping his commandments there is great reward." Now, who is there that will dare to say that Christ has not commanded *all* believers to be baptized, as an indication of *their own repentance and faith?* Who will *prove* a permission from divine authority, for *any* penitent and believing soul to dispense with this delightful act of obedience? *None has ever been shown.* It is in fact *cruel* towards God's children, that their spiritual instructors should debar them by thousands from an act of obedience which they would readily perform, would those on whom they place so much reliance but express their approval of it. The contests, struggles, and hindrances, which those of Christ's flock under pædobaptist shepherds have in many instances to go through, when they desire to perform this act of obedience, are too well known to require description, and involve the individuals who inflict them in a most serious responsibility.*

No one will deny that baptism, as stated in the New Testament, is both adapted and designed by its great institutor to produce the important moral influences on the person bap-

* I speak from experience. It was with great difficulty that two Presbyterian friends of my acquaintance, who had become convinced of their error, and were desirous to obey Christ, escaped severe censure, if not excommunication, by the session of the church with which they were connected; and yet some of these worthy individuals (for such I know them to be) are thoughtless enough to charge Baptists with bigotry!

nized to which I have thus briefly referred: neither can any one fail to perceive that such influence is wholly dependent on the fact of baptism being a voluntary act. It is needless, therefore, to say that, by *taking away baptism from the believer and transferring it to infants*, these moral influences are wholly lost. A responsibility, truly, which ought to make the perpetrators of this annihilating transfer reflect and tremble! It is a momentous charge against infant baptism, that, as far as it prevails, it blots out the baptism of repentance and remission of sins.

The devout pædobaptist who reads these pages, cannot fail to have some painful feelings on this subject; but probably he will console himself with the thought, that other holy tendencies, counterbalancing the loss referred to, arise from the practice of infant baptism. Let us examine this point.

What will be the first reflection of the mature mind, when it refers to the act of its parents or sponsors? Will it be inclined to recognize the declaration as true, that, when a babe, it did believe, and renounce the devil and the world with all its pomps? Perhaps my reader will say, "I am a Presbyterian, and deem sponsors and their fictitious declarations absurd and foolish." Very well. Will your son be inclined to believe that he was "ingrafted into Christ" because you were a believer when he was born? Will he be inclined to recognize your "sealing him?" When I say "will he be inclined," I mean, of course, is the fact of your sealing him in baptism, without his knowledge or consent, *adapted* to obtain his consent when arrived at mature age? Those who have at all made mental philosophy their study will be inclined to answer in the negative.

Again.—As the child of the pædobaptist grows up, he finds that, without his knowledge or consent, he has actually

been made, in a sense more or less definite, a member of Christ's church. If the son of a Greek pædobaptist, he has partaken of both sacraments before he knew it, and is, to all intents and purposes, a full member of the church. If he be the son of an Episcopalian, he has the satisfaction to learn from his sponsor and his catechism, that he has been made "an heir of the kingdom of heaven;" but that he needs *confirmation*, before he can be a full member of the church on earth. This, by the way, as Mr. Bingham allows, is a decided departure, on the part of our Episcopal friends, from the ancient church and the Nicene Fathers. It is probable that the Oxford Tract party will be able to restore to infants their ancient rights of confirmation and communion, instead of making them wait till they are sixteen years of age; an innovation of Calvin's very defacing to the antique character of the Episcopal church. I mean no sarcasm. It is certainly desirable to be consistent. The son of the Presbyterian finds that he is, *in some sense*, a member of the church, but that his parents cannot explain to him in *what* sense; neither can his minister make it plain to him. If he goes to books, he will find one pædobaptist divine say one thing, and another something very different. Dr. Miller feels on this point very keenly; his characteristic virtue, however—boldness, does not fail him even here; and he seems inclined to take forcible possession of all the young gentlemen and ladies who have been (in their unconscious infancy) baptized into the Presbyterian church.

"It is objected," says the Princeton professor, "that pædobaptists *are not consistent with themselves, in that they do not treat their children as if they were members of the church.* 'Pædobaptists,' say our Baptist brethren, 'maintain that the children of professing christians are, in virtue of their birth, members of the church—plenary members—

externally in covenant with God, and as such made the subjects of a sacramental seal. Yet we seldom or never see a pædobaptist church *treating her baptized children as church members*, that is, instructing, watching over, and disciplining them, as in the case of adult members. Does not this manifest that their system is inconsistent with itself, impracticable, and therefore unsound?" This objection is *a most serious and weighty one*, adds Dr. M., and ought to engage the conscientious attention of every pædobaptist who wishes to maintain his profession with consistency, and to edification.

"It cannot be denied, then, that the *great mass* of the pædobaptist churches *do act inconsistently* in regard to this matter. They do *not* carry out, and apply their own system by a corresponding practice.* That baptized children should not be treated by the church and her officers just as other children are treated; that they should receive the seal of a covenant relation to God and his people, and then be left to negligence and sin without official inspection, and without discipline, precisely as those are left who bear no relation to the church, is, it must be confessed, altogether inconsistent with the nature and design of the ordinance, and in a high degree unfriendly to the best interests of the church of God."

After speaking of the necessity of parents and ministers giving a constant series of instruction, and exercising a watchful care over the morals of "*baptized* children," Dr. Miller then proceeds to carry out his principles of infant baptism to their full extent.

"If instruction and exhortation be disregarded, and a course of error, immorality, or negligence, be indulged in, let warning, admonition, *suspension, or excommunication*

* Perhaps, then, Baptists may be allowed to wait till it is ascertained if "the pædobaptist system" be actually practicable.

ensue, according to the character of the individual, and the exigencies of the case. 'What!' some will be disposed to say, 'suspend or excommunicate a young person, who has never yet taken his seat at a sacramental table, nor even asked for that privilege?' *Certainly.* Why not? *If* the children of professing christians *are born members of the church*, and are *baptized as a sign and seal of this membership*, nothing can be plainer than that *they ought to be treated in every respect as church members*,* and, of course, if they act in an unchristian manner, a bar ought to be set up in the way of their enjoying christian privileges. *If this be not admitted, we must give up the very first principles of ecclesiastical order and duty.* Nor is there, obviously, any thing more incongruous in suspending or excluding from church privileges a young man, or young woman, who has been baptized in infancy, and trained up in the bosom of the church, but has now no regard for religion, than there is in suspending or excommunicating one who has been for many years an attendant on the Lord's table, but has now forsaken the house of God, and has no longer any desire to approach a christian ordinance. No one would consider it as either incongruous or unreasonable to declare such a person unworthy of christian fellowship, and excluded from it, though he had no disposition to enjoy it. The very same principle applies in the case now under consideration."

Will an intelligent community of free-men, in the nineteenth century, suffer such a yoke as this to be thrown around the necks of their children? If this were possible, we might then, indeed, apprehend the rapid development, in the western continent, of spiritual despotism, in the form of American Presbyterian popery!

Now, I ask, what is the moral influence all this infan-

* Then why withhold from them the Lord's supper?

baptizing is *adapted* to produce in the minds of those involuntary members, either of the Greek, Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Methodist churches? The grace of God may, in many instances, prevent it; but the natural tendency of this system is to produce disgust and alienation, where all would be most desirous to secure respect and kindly feeling.

Nor is this all. To my own knowledge, spiritual embarrassment and confusion, of the most stupifying, or else distressing kind, is the result of this system. I once met on the road a poor old man of more than seventy, and inquired of him respecting his spiritual condition. In the course of conversation the question arose whether he had been "born again?" "Regenerated, you mean, I suppose," said the old man. "Certainly," was the reply. "Why," exclaimed the old man in astonishment, "to be sure; was not I regenerated in my *baptism?*" I explained to him the error on which he was risking his soul. He replied, "The priest told me so." I rejoined, that he must look to the Bible, and *not mind what priests said*. His final reply was, "*What are they for, then?*" and he turned away, as from a heretic. Thus is the legitimate effect of Protestant Episcopal pædobaptism. I rejoice to know that numbers of excellent and devotedly pious men, ministers of episcopal churches, on both sides of the Atlantic, exert themselves to prevent this grievous mischief: but I know too (with deep regret I say it) that there are yet more who foster and encourage it.

Is John Calvin's institution of infant baptism wholly free from this injurious tendency? Certainly not. The state of the Scotch church evinces this. There thousands, who never profess to have been converted, or to have experienced any change of heart, are fully members of the church, and partake of its solemn communion. Many respectable gentlemen of that church, who were in the constant practice of communing in Scotland, in compliance with what is there

deemed necessary to good standing in society, are happy when they land on these shores to escape the necessity of such a profanation. In other instances, the minds of well-disposed individuals remain for years in a state of doubt as to their regeneration, in consequence of the confusion of their ideas resulting from their baptism in infancy, and their consequent supposed relation to Christ and his church. I sincerely sympathize with them, and pray the Lord, by his word and Spirit, to relieve them from the mists with which the traditions of men have surrounded them.

SECTION III.

MORAL INFLUENCE OF BAPTISM ON THE CHURCH.

1. Believers' baptism requires and admits of no other authority than the scriptures. According to the very best pædobaptist authorities themselves, infant baptism requires the reception of tradition to sustain it. It has been fully proved, indeed, that even tradition does *not* sustain it. But the very fact of appealing to tradition exercises a baneful influence on the church, and especially on the ministry of the church; for, the people at large having no adequate knowledge of ecclesiastical history, the sad influence of party spirit has, through the existence of infant baptism, effectuated a deviation from moral rectitude in the presentation of the history relating to tradition, to which, for the sake of the feelings of my brethren, I shall not at present further allude.

2. The practice of believers' baptism sustains the principle that Christ is the legislator of his church, and that the

ordinances and government of the church are to be derived from the New Testament alone. Infant baptism, on the contrary, has intermingled Judaism and Christianity, and that to a most pernicious extent. The doctrine of the New Testament is, that Christ is the High Priest, and that every christian is a "king and *priest*" unto God. But, as we have seen, the defence of infant baptism has led even Dr. Woods to connect the Christian ministry with the Levitical priesthood! The *mass* follows, of course; for, what is the use of a *priesthood* without a *sacrifice* to be offered?

3. Believers' baptism *harmonizes* with the genius of christianity. It is both *spiritual* and *personal*. Why should that harmony be violated in a solitary case? The Jewish economy, indeed, was replete with vicariousness; the priest and the offering—the incessant round of vicarious rites, were typical of the one great substitute, "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." But, in the christian dispensation, Christ is the only vicarious priest, and the only vicarious sacrifice. Infant baptism, as still generally practised,[1] violates these great principles of christianity, and attributes a greater work of substitution to the sponsor than even to Christ: for Christ has not repented and believed in our stead, but the sponsor is represented as performing these acts for the child. In other cases the parents' faith avails the child, as we have seen Calvin strenuously maintain. The declaration of Paul is, that we become children of God by our *individual faith* in Christ; and this is the *only method of union* with Christ indicated in the apostolic writings. It is a great moral evil that results from infant baptism, that it adds to the word of God, and even contradicts it, in so important a matter.

[1] The *third* kind of baptism that of the Reformers) has but few adherents, when compared with the numerous advocates of the *second* (that of the Fathers in the Roman, Greek, Eastern and Episcopal churches.

4. The baptism of believers constitutes a strong line of demarcation between the church and the world. Its moral influence, both on the church and the world, is in this respect as potent as it is wholesome. Every true christian knows of how deep importance it is, that none of the landmarks which Christ has set up should be defaced, much less removed. Here begins to appear the most lamentable moral influence of infant baptism. *It has the very contrary effect to that for which baptism was designed by its Founder.* Instead of *separating* the church and the world, it actually *unites* them. Of this every one who will take a view of the pædobaptist national churches now existing, must be at once convinced. Are not the Roman, Greek, Lutheran, Reformed, Episcopal, and Presbyterian national churches, all pædobaptist? And how wretchedly are the world and the church mixed together in them all!

Did the limits of this work permit, I might dwell upon the fact that the infant-membership plan, throughout all the pædobaptist churches of the continent, did not *prevent* them from losing, almost entirely, evangelical doctrine and vital piety; and I might proceed to investigate the moral philosophy of the fact, that, while the Congregationalist bodies, Baptist and pædobaptist, retained the purity of their faith, the Presbyterian body, though decidedly Calvinistic in sentiment in the seventeenth century, fell off, both in England and on the continent, first into Arianism, and then into Socinianism. I apprehend such an investigation would prove satisfactorily, that the *formalizing* tendency of infant church-membership had a potent influence in allowing the enemy of souls to "steal away the kernel" of truth. I invite the attention of my esteemed relative, the author of Ancient Christianity, to this subject. Let him *probe* the Reformed as he has the ancient church.

The unhappy and paralysing contests which for years

distracted the Presbyterian church of America, and which at length rent it asunder, may reasonably be traced, in great measure, to the inevitable tendency of infant membership to introduce individuals into the ministry of the gospel, as well as to church-membership, upon their parents' faith.* Such persons must ever have more relish for contests respecting forms and creeds, than delight in the promotion of "love, peace, and joy;" which, flowing as they do from the influence of the Holy Spirit, not only promote the prosperity of the church, but form the true safeguards of its doctrinal purity.

5. The baptism of believers clearly tends to organize a kingdom "not of this world." It renders a national establishment all but impossible. Its tendency is wholly adverse to any intermixture of church and state. Infant baptism, on the contrary, lies at the very foundation of national establishments. Dr. Wall justly asserts that all national churches have practised infant baptism. Nothing can be plainer than that, where infant baptism is universally practised, national

* This allegation has, I am aware, given offence to some of my Presbyterian brethren; and could I conscientiously withhold this truth, I would have withdrawn the passage from this edition; but as I am perfectly satisfied, after all the explanations which have been made, that it is the practice, to a considerable extent, in pædobaptist churches, for parents and guardians to train up children for the ministry as they would for other *professions*; that the pædobaptist churches of the old world are thereby flooded with unconverted ministers; and that from my own knowledge instances of this practice exist in our own country, (though happily much more rare;) I can neither conceal the fact, nor doubt its connection with infant baptism. That sufficient precaution is not always used among Baptists, in the admission of persons to the work of the ministry, I will not deny; nor that, after the due exercise of every proper precaution, individual instances of an unconverted ministry will still be found. But this is no apology for aggravating the evil, by making unconverted children members of the church, and training some of them, in their unconverted state, for the ministry.

churches, with all their evils, *must* exist; because the nation is brought into the church in its infancy. The power Dr. Miller would assert over children and youth, is greater than that of the civil authority, and constitutes the very *imperium in imperio* out of which popery arose.

Accordingly, we find it indelibly inscribed on the page of history, that the practice of baptizing infants did not spread extensively, till after christianity became the state religion of the Roman empire. When an empire has a religion, that religion must have a head. Thus two organized bodies are constituted—the state and the church. While the papacy had undivided sway, the national churches had, at least professedly, a spiritual head, the bishop of Rome, claiming the entire control of the religious affairs of all Christian nations, leaving to kings their temporal affairs—provided, however, they managed them to his satisfaction, otherwise a bull of excommunication would explain the superiority of the spiritual to the temporal dominion. Henry VIII. deemed it inconvenient to have his subjects under any foreign control, and therefore he determined to act the part of pope and king too; a resolution highly applauded by those of his subjects who had the beautiful estates of the suppressed monasteries bestowed upon them, as convincing proofs of the correctness of the king's spiritual views.

I do not design to encourage the insinuation that pædobaptists, either Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Methodist, have any present design to erect a national establishment on the ruins of our free institutions—the dissensions among pædobaptists themselves happily render this impracticable: but it must be evident to every reflecting mind, that, if any one pædobaptist denomination were to absorb all others, and there were no "ignorant and contentious" Baptists remaining, a national establishment would then be inevitable; while, on the other hand, were Baptist

principles universally prevalent, a national establishment would be as impracticable as it would be undesired. It should be borne in mind, that, while Episcopalianism is the established religion of England, Presbyterianism is the established religion of Scotland; and that Wesleyan Methodism, in England, has always evinced strong tendencies towards nationalism, and still exhibits a decided sympathy with the establishment, in opposition to liberal measures in church and state. On the continent of Europe, national establishments and prelacy are synonymous. Baptists alone refuse to sanction the alliance of religion with the civil authority.

6. The moral influence of believers' baptism is wholly opposed to priestcraft of every kind. It receives no member into the church till he has been brought to *think for himself* on the most important of all subjects—the salvation of his soul. It teaches him to call no man master but Christ. On the contrary, the whole system of infant baptism requires the "church-member" first to be baptized without his knowledge, and then, as soon as he can learn the form of words, to be drilled into systematic doctrines, which, as it required the minds of great men to arrange, so it needs the application of intense thought to comprehend. Instead of instructing children simply in the scriptures, they are the last thought of, kept behind the "confession of faith," the "articles," or the "catechism."

While intellectual freedom is inscribed on the banner of christianity, and every man is called on to be "fully persuaded in his own mind," and to "hold fast the liberty wherewith Christ hath made him free," infant baptism begins with a *compulsory* administration of the ordinance; and, according to Dr. Miller, it requires a *compulsory* ecclesiastical discipline to be exercised over the children, who, when come to years of maturity, instead of being left to the

natural and rational liberty of forming their own ideas as to what truths the scriptures contain, find that the church, which baptized them without their knowledge, has every article of their religious faith already drawn out for them! A system more unlike the glorious freedom of christianity—whose divinely authenticated apostles even did not lord it over the faith of God's heritage, but delighted to be "helpers of their joy"—could not well be devised; and it all originates in making the church of Christ actually and literally consist of babes and children, instead of disciples of a child-like disposition and temper—those who can be happy together in simplicity and humility, without tyrannizing over the consciences of their fellow-men by pretensions to spiritual authority.

7. Finally, the baptism of the New Testament, that of believers, is wholly opposed to, and destructive of the Papal apostasy, theoretically and practically. Had men been left till they had arrived at years of discretion, before they were invited to become members of that church, how many millions would have refused to enter who found themselves already entangled in her snare! The apostle assures us that "the mystery of iniquity" had already begun to work; and to what can he more naturally be supposed to refer, than to those Judaizing, formalizing doctrines, which prepared the way for infant baptism—the stepping-stone by which the Papal apostasy mounted its throne? What could the most ambitious priesthood desire more, than to have all the children of the nation made full members of the church, and therefore exposed to all the ecclesiastical and civil terrors of excommunication, if they were in the least degree refractory?

As the Papal system could never have been organized without infant baptism, so every reflecting mind will at once perceive that it cannot continue to exist when that perverted

rite is withdrawn. How many persons of mature age and understanding would now repair to the Papal font to be baptized, and enter that church, if they had been left unbaptized, and wholly unconnected with it, till they were grown up? If the church of Rome were to renounce infant baptism, her arrogant pretensions must be speedily laid aside, and she would either rapidly return to apostolic christianity, or as rapidly cease to be. Dr. Brownlee would have aimed a more deadly blow at the main principle and support of popery by abandoning infant baptism, than by all the efforts he and his associates have hitherto made.

Dr. Gill was deemed severe when he expressed the sentiment, that infant baptism was "a part and pillar of popery;" but his able vindication of that position must have made his opponents wish they had passed by his original expression in silence. I fully concur with the learned doctor in his opinion. The history of infant baptism, as exhibited in the pages of this volume, has clearly identified it with the Judaizing principles—the formalizing tendency—the terrifying doctrines—the absurd ceremonies—and, above all, the priesteraft-policy, which resulted in the establishment of Popery.

May the providence and grace of God speedily remove this source of evil and of discord from the midst of his people, that they may rejoice together in the spirit of Him, who, when men lack wisdom and ask it, "giveth liberally, and upbraideth not!"

THE END.

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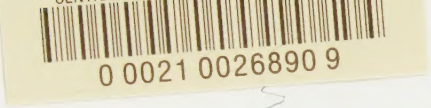
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